

A History of the English Baptists

Including an Investigation of the History of Baptism in England from the earliest period to which it can be traced to the close of the seventeenth century. To which are prefixed, testimonies of ancient writers in favour of Adult Baptism: extracted from Dr. Gill's piece, entitled, "The Divine Right of Infant Baptism Examined and Disproved."

By Joseph Ivimey

1811

London: Printed for the Author

Way of Life Literature electronic edition, May 2003

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Bible-believing Christian burned by Catholic authorities during the inquisition in England

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Petty France
Lorimer'-hall
Walbrook
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Currier's-Hall, Cripplegate
Pinner's'-hall

Sabbatarian Church, Pinners'-hall
Goat-street, Horselydown, Southwark
Unicorn-yard
Carter-lane
Maze-pond
White-street
Snow's-fields
Colliers'-rents
Joiners'-hall
Tallow-chandlers'-hall
Great Eastcheap
Goodman's-yard, in the minories
Church-lane, Limehouse
Ayle's-street and Angel-alley
Shadwell
Prescot-street
Little Alie-street
Little Wild-street
Eagle-street

THE LIFE OF JOSEPH IVIMEY (1773-1830)

The following is from *The Baptist Encyclopedia*, 1881:

Joseph Ivimey was born at Ringwood, Hampshire, England, May 22, 1773. When a youth he was convicted of sin, and a gospel hope first entered his heart through the stanza,--

"In the world of endless ruin
It shall never once be said,
There's a soul that perished suing
For the Saviour's promised aid."

This hope was soon after confirmed, so that he could regard the Saviour as his. He was baptized Sept. 16, 1790. He was ordained pastor of the Eagle Street church, Red Lion Square, London, Jan. 16, 1805. His labors were attended with great success. He was gifted with much energy, with an unusual power of gaining and keeping information, and with fearless faithfulness in proclaiming the whole truth of God. He had the happiness of baptizing his own father and mother. His father was seventy years of age at the time of his immersion, and only partook of the Lord's Supper once after he was received into the church.

Mr. Ivimey wrote a life of John Bunyan, which enjoyed considerable popularity, and "A History of the English Baptists," in four octavo volumes, the last two of which were published in 1830. This history is invaluable. It is only seldom for sale, and when it can be purchased it is held at a high price. He was also the author of other works.

Mr. Ivimey closed his useful life Feb. 8, 1834. A little before his departure he said,--

"Not a wave of trouble rolls
Across my peaceful breast."

The following testimony about Ivimey is by Thomas Armitage, author of *A History of the Baptists*:

"Our English brethren have produced several able historians; as Crosby, Orchard, Mann, Robinson, Evans, Stokes, Jones and Ivimey. Not having room to speak of them all, a word may be said of JOSEPH IVIMEY, by no means the least in the list. He was born in Hampshire in 1773, and became pastor of the Eagle Street Church, London, in 1805. As a defender of the truth he was fearless, and won many souls to Christ, amongst whom was the late Dr. John Bowling, of New York. He baptized both his mother and father, the last at the age of seventy. His *Life of Milton*, and *History of the English Baptists* (four volumes), are very valuable works. His name is fragrant in all the English Churches. He died in 1830" (Thomas Armitage, *A History of the Baptists*).

The following is from *The English Baptists of the 17th Century* by Barrington R. White:

Joseph Ivimey, many years minister of the Particular Baptist Church at Eagle Street, London, was an active writer and theological controversialist, deeply concerned for denominational affairs and, perhaps especially, for the Baptist Irish Society. He was also

able to search out and use some of the oldest London congregations' records. While, therefore, he certainly owed much to the work of Crosby and Rippon he was also able to add a good deal of material he had himself discovered as he brought the story down to 1820.

Like Crosby, Ivimey too set out to act both as the apologist for the Baptists and as their critic as well as their historian. In the first volume of his work he asserted that 'the English Baptists held the genuine principles of the Reformation and pursued them to their legitimate consequences. Believing that the Bible alone contains the religion of Protestants, they rejected everything in the worship of God which was not found in the sacred oracles.' Secondly, he attempted to show that in England infant baptism owed its origin to Popery and, thirdly, that the English Baptists 'were the first persons who understood the important doctrine of Christian liberty, and who zealously opposed all persecution for the sake of conscience.'

Since Ivimey's volumes were published with intervals of several years between each one and the next it was not surprising that changing concerns were reflected in them as the work developed. His second volume was especially dedicated, as he explained in its preface, to demonstrating the worth of those who had been ministers in the past and to awakening contemporary 'Baptist ministers and churches to imitate the piety, simplicity and zeal of their progenitors.' His third volume had, he said, as a primary concern that of answering those who thought the Baptists were 'the most sectarian of sects, the most entrenched and fortified in the narrow circle of its communion.' In the preface to his final volume, however, Ivimey turned his attention once more inwards to his own denomination: after discussing some of its strengths he rebuked some of its weaknesses. Among these he listed open communion, ignorant ministers, tyrannical deacons and, more generally, disobedience to Christ!

PREFACE

The Reformation was an important era in the history of this country. The fetters with which Popery had long shackled the minds of men were then knocked off, and the use of the bible led many to embrace those sentiments in doctrine and discipline, which accorded with the simplicity of Christ.

The subsequent history is an attempt to prove that the English Baptists held the genuine principles of the Reformation, and pursued them to their legitimate consequences. Believing that the bible alone contains the religion of Protestants, they rejected every thing in the worship of God which was not found in the sacred oracles.

Without intending to offend those who differ from the English Baptists in their distinguishing tenet, we think it right to premise, that this work will also attempt to prove,

that Infant baptism in England owes its origin to Popery;--that the ancient British Christians before the coming of Austin knew nothing of the practice;--and that many at least of the Wickliffites and Lollards, the first English reformers, rejected it as a popish innovation and maintained that "all traditions not found in the scriptures were superfluous and wicked."

It was these sentiments which led to the formation of societies dissenting from the Popish establishment before the Reformation, and dissenting from the Protestant establishment afterwards.

The English Baptists were the first persons who understood the important doctrine of Christian liberty, and who zealously opposed all persecution for the sake of conscience.

A large proportion of their churches were averse to all interference with political matters during the convulsive period of the civil wars. It is, however, to be lamented that some of them during that period confounded the power of the magistrate with the government of that kingdom which is not of this world.

The sufferings which have been endured by the English Baptists on account of their religious principles, give them a claim to the gratitude of every true lover of liberty and of his country. To them may be applied with peculiar propriety, what the historian Hume says of the Puritans in general: "By whom the precious spark of liberty was kindled and preserved."

It is not too much to say that their history has never been fairly given. Influenced by prejudice, many of our historians have either kept them out of sight, or have exhibited them to public ridicule and contempt.

For many of his materials the writer is indebted to Crosby's *History of the English Baptists*, in 4 vols. octavo, published about seventy years ago. This work is now become very scarce; and it is so badly written, that an abridgement and arrangement of its contents have long been thought desirable.

He has also endeavoured to collect those works published by themselves, from which may most certainly be drawn a fair statement of their principles. Though he has succeeded in his researches beyond his expectations, he is desirous of procuring additional particulars concerning them, that the biographical part of the work, which he intends to publish in another volume, may be rendered as perfect as possible. He has prefixed the extract from Dr. Gill's work, entitled, "The Divine Right of Infant baptism examined and disproved," in order to show that there is no evidence that Infant baptism is of apostolical origin; and also, that the testimonies of ancient writers are in favour of adult baptism.

The author takes this opportunity of acknowledging his obligations to many of his brethren for their readiness to assist him. He desires more particularly to return thanks for the use of the Manuscript of the late Rev. Joshua Thomas of Leominster; to the Rev. Mr.

Frost of Dunmow in Essex, for the use of a valuable Manuscript of his progenitor, Mr. William Kiffin; and for the liberty of consulting the Manuscripts and other works deposited in Dr. Williams's library, Red-Cross Street, London.

As to the use which he has made of his materials, it must be left to his readers to decide. He is, however, prepared to say, that he has faithfully related the facts which have come to his knowledge, without a wish to promote any object but the cause of God and truth.

If his labours should be useful to the denomination to which he considers it an honour to belong, by exciting them to a zealous imitation of the virtues of their ancestors, he will receive an abundant compensation; to which will be added the high gratification of having done all in his power, that the names of some of those great men may be had in everlasting remembrance.

The Author

London, Jan. 1, 1811

THE DIVINE RIGHT OF INFANT BAPTISM EXAMINED AND DISPROVED

By John Gill

Of the Antiquity of Infant Baptism; When First Debated; and Concerning the Waldenses

The minister, in the dialogue, in order to stagger his neighbour about the principle of adult baptism he had espoused, suggests to him, that infant baptism did universally obtain in the church, even from the apostles' times; that undoubted evidence may be had from the ancient fathers, that it constantly obtained in the truly primitive church; and that it cannot be pretended that this practice was called in question, or made matter of debate in the church, till the madmen of Munster set themselves against it; and affirms, that the ancient Waldenses being in the constant practice of adult baptism, is a mere imagination, a chimerical one, and to be rejected as a groundless figment, p. 7,9.

I. This writer intimates, that the practice of infant baptism universally and constantly obtained in the truly primitive church. The truly primitive church, is the church in the times of Christ and his apostles. The first christian church was that at Jerusalem, which consisted of such as were made the disciples of Christ, and baptized; first made disciples by Christ, and then baptized by his apostles; for Jesus himself baptized none, only they

baptized by his order. [John 4:1,2] This church afterwards greatly increased; three thousand persons, who were pricked to the heart under Peter's ministry, repented of their sins, and joyfully received the good news of pardon and salvation by Christ, were baptized, and added to it; these were adult persons; nor do we read of any one infant being baptized while this truly primitive church subsisted. The next christian church was that at Samaria; for that there was a church there is evident from Acts 9:31. This seems to have been founded by the ministry of Philip; the original members of it were men and women baptized by Philip, upon a profession of their faith in the things preached by him, concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ. [Acts 8:12] Nor is there the least intimation given that infant baptism at all obtained in this church. Another truly primitive christian church, was the church at Philippi; the foundation of which was laid in the two families of Lydia and the gaoler, and which furnish out no proof of infant baptism obtaining here; for Lydia's household are called brethren, whom the apostles visited and comforted; and the gaoler's household were such as were capable of hearing the word, and who believed in Christ, and rejoiced in God as well as he. [Acts 16:14,15,32,33,35,40] So that it does not appear that infant baptism obtained in this church. The next christian church we read of, and which was a truly primitive one, is the church at Corinth, and consisted of persons who, hearing the apostle Paul preach the gospel, believed in Christ, whom he preached, and were baptized; [Acts 18:8] but there is no mention made of any infant being baptized, either now or hereafter, in this truly primitive church state. These are all the truly primitive churches, of whose baptism we have any account in the Acts of the apostles, excepting Cornelius, and his family and friends, who very probably founded a church at Caesarea; and the twelve disciples at Ephesus, who very likely joined to the church there, and who are both instances of adult baptism. [Acts 10:48 and 19:1-7] Let it be made appear, if it can, that any one infant was ever baptized in any of the above truly primitive churches, or in any other during the apostolic age, either at Antioch or Thessalonica, at Rome or at Colosse, or any other primitive church of those times. But though this cannot be made out from the writings of the new Testament, we are told,

II. That undoubted evidence may be had from the ancient fathers, that infant baptism constantly obtained in the truly primitive church. Let us a little inquire into this matter.

1. The christian writers of the first century, besides the evangelists and apostles, are Barnabas, Hermas, Clemens Romanus, Ignatius and Polycarp. As to the two first of these, Barnabas and Hermas, the learned Mr. Stennet [*Answer to Russen*, p. 142,143] has cited some passages out of them; and after him Mr. David Rees; [*Answer to Walker*, p. 157, etc.] for which reason, I forbear transcribing them; (A) which are manifest proofs of adult baptism, and that as performed by immersion; they represent the persons baptized, the one [Barnabas Epist. c. 9. p. 235,236] as hoping in the cross of Christ, the other [Hermas Pastor, l. 1. viz. 3. s.7. and l.3. s. 16] as having heard the word, and being willing to be baptized in the name of the Lord; and both as going down into the water, and coming up out of it. Clemens Romanus wrote an epistle to the Corinthians, still extant; but there is not a syllable in it about infant baptism. Ignatius wrote epistles to several churches, as well as to particular persons; but makes no mention of the practice of infant baptism in any of them: what he says of baptism, favours adult baptism; since he speaks of it as

attended with faith, love, and patience: "Let your baptism (says he) remain as armour; faith as an helmet, love as a spear, and patience as whole armour." [Ignatii Epist. ad Polycarp. p. 11] Polycarp wrote an epistle to the Philippians, which is yet in being; but there is not one word in it about infant baptism. So that it is so far from being true, that there is undoubted evidence from the ancient fathers, that this practice universally and constantly obtained in the truly primitive church, that there is no evidence at all that it did obtain, in any respect, in the first century, or apostolic age; and which is the only period in which the truly primitive church of Christ can be said to subsist. There is indeed a work called, *The Constitutions of the Apostles*, and sometimes the *Constitutions of Clemens*, because he is said to be the compiler of them; and another book of *Ecclesiastical Hierarchy*, ascribed to Dionysius the Areopagite, out of which passages have been cited in favour of infant baptism; but these are manifestly of later date than they pretend to, and were never written by the persons whose names they bear, and are condemned as spurious by learned men, and are given up as such by Dr. Wall, in his *History of Infant Baptism*. [Part I. c. 23]

2. The christian writers of the second century, which are extant, are Justin Martyr, Athenagoras, Theophilus at Antioch, Tatian, Minutius Felix, Irenaeus, and Clemens of Alexandria; and of all these writers, there is not one that says any thing of infant baptism; there is but one pretended to, and that is Irenaeus; and but a single passage out of him; and that depends upon a single word, the signification of which is doubtful at best; and besides the passage is only a translation of Irenaeus, and not expressed in his own original words; and the chapter from whence it is taken, is by some learned men judged to be spurious; since it advances a notion inconsistent with that ancient writer, and notoriously contrary to the books of the evangelists, making Christ to live to be fifty years old, yea, to live to a senior age: the passage produced in favour of infant baptism, is this: speaking of Christ, he says,

"Sanctifying every age, by that a likeness it had to him; for he came to save all by himself; all, I say, *qui per cum renascuntur in Deum*, who by him are born again unto God; infants, and little ones, and children, and young men, and old men; therefore he went through every age, and became an infant to infants, sanctifying infants; and to little ones a little one, sanctifying those of that age; and likewise became an example of piety, righteousness, and subjection." [Irenaeus adv. Haeres, l. 2. c.39. p. 191]

Now, the question is about the word *renascunter*, whether it is to be rendered *born again*, which is the literal sense of the word; or *baptized*; the true sense of Irenaeus seems to be this, that Christ came to save all that are regenerated by his grace and Spirit; and none but they, according to his own words; [John 3:3,5] and that by assuming human nature, and passing through the several stages of life, he has sanctified it, and set an example to men of every age.

And this now is all the evidence, the undoubted evidence of infant baptism, from the fathers of the first two centuries. It would be easy to produce passages out of the above writers, in favour of believer_s baptism; I shall only cite one out of the first of them; the account that Justin Martyr gave to the Emperor Antoninus Pius of the christians of his

day, though it has been cited by Mr. Stennet and Mr. Rees, I shall choose to transcribe it; because, as Dr. Wall says [*History of Infant Baptism*, Part I. c. 2], it is the most ancient account of the way of baptizing next the scripture.

"And now, says Justin, we will declare after what manner, when we were renewed by Christ, we devoted ourselves unto God; lest, omitting this, we should seem to act a bad part in this declaration. As many as are persuaded, and believe the things taught and said by us, to be true, and promise to live according to them, are instructed to pray, and to ask fasting, the forgiveness of their past sins of God, we praying and fasting together with them. After that, they are brought by us, where water is, and they are regenerated in the same way of regeneration, as we have been regenerated; for they are then washed in water, in the name of the Father and the Lord God of all, and of our Saviour Jesus Christ, and of the holy Spirit."

There is a work, which bears the name of Justin, called *Answers to the Orthodox*, concerning some necessary questions; to which we are sometimes referred for a proof of infant baptism; but the book is spurious, and none of Justin's, as many learned men have observed, and as Dr. Wall allows; and is thought not to have been written before the fifth century. So stands the evidence for infant baptism from the ancient fathers of the first two centuries.

3. As to the third century, it will be allowed that it was spoken of in it; though as soon as it was mentioned it was opposed; and the very first man that mentions it speaks against it, namely, TERTULLIAN. The truth of the matter is, that infant baptism was moved for in the third century; got footing and establishment in the fourth and fifth; and so prevailed until the time of the reformation. Though throughout these several centuries there were testimonies bore to adult baptism; and at several times, certain persons rose up, and opposed infant baptism; which brings me,

III. To consider what our author affirms, that is cannot be pretended that this practice was called in question, or made matter of debate in the church, until the madmen of Munster set themselves against it, [*Divine Right of Infant Baptism*, p. 7. Let us examine this matter, and,

1. It should be observed, that the disturbances in Germany, which our Pedobaptist writers so often refer to in this controversy about baptism, and so frequently reproach us with, were first begun in the wars of the Boors, by such as were Pedobaptists, and them only; first by the Papists, some few years before the reformation; and after that, both by Lutherans and Papists, on account of civil liberties; among whom, in process of time, some few of the people called Anabaptists mingled themselves; a people that scarce in any thing agree with us, neither in their civil nor religious principles, nor even in baptism itself; for if we can depend on those that wrote the history of them, and against them, they were for repeating adult baptism, not performed among them; yea, that which was administered among themselves, when they removed their communion to another society; nay, even in the same community, when an excommunicated person was received again; [Cloppenburg. Gangraena, p. 366; Spanhem, Diatribe Hist. Sect. 27] besides, if what is

reported of them is true, as it may be, their baptism was performed by sprinkling, which we cannot allow to be true baptism; it is said, that when a community of them was satisfied with the person's faith and conversation, who proposed himself for baptism, the pastor took water into his hand, and sprinkled it on the head of him that was to be baptized, using these words, I baptize thee in the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. [Budneus apnd Meshov. *Hist. Anabapt.* l. 4. p. 96] And even the disturbances in Munster, a famous city in Westphalia, were first begun by Bernard Rotman, a Pedobaptist minister of the Lutheran persuasion, assisted by other ministers of the reformation, in opposition to the papists in the year 1532; and it was not till the year 1533, that John Matthias of Harlem, and John Bocolodus of Leyden came to this place; [Sleiden, *Comment.* l. 10. p. 267,269; Spauhem, *Diatrobe Hist. de Origine Anabaptist.* Sect. 18] who, with Knipperdolling and others, are, I suppose, the madmen of Munster, this writer means; and he may call them madmen, if he pleases; I shall not contend with him about it; they were mad notions which they held, and mad actions they performed; and both disavowed by the people, who are now called Anabaptists; though it is not reasonable to suppose, that these were the only men concerned in that affair, or that the number of their followers should increase to such a degree in so small a time, as to make such a revolution in so large a city. However, certain it is that it was not their principle about baptism that led them into such extravagant notions and actions. But what I take notice of all this for, is chiefly to observe the date of the confusions and distractions in which these madmen were concerned, which were from the year 1533 to 1536.(B)

And our next inquiry therefore is, whether there was any debate about the practice of infant baptism before this time.

2. It will appear, that it was frequently debated, before these men set themselves against it, or acted the made part they did. In the years 1532 and 1528, there were public disputations at Berne in Switzerland, between the ministers of the church there and some Anabaptist teachers; [Spanhem. *ibid.* Sect. 13; Meshov. *Anabapt. Histor.* p. 3. p. 16,18] in the year 1529, 1527, and 1525, Oecolampadius had various disputes with people of this name at Basil in the same country; [Spanhem. Sect. 13; Meshovius, *ibid.* c. 2] in the year 1525, there was a dispute at Zurich in the same country about Pedobaptism, between Swinglius, one of the first reformers, and Dr. Balthasar Hubmeierus, [Spanhem. Sect. 11; Meshov. l. 2. c.4] who afterwards was burnt, and his wife drowned at Vienna, in the year 1528; of whom Moshovius, [Summa Coutrovera. l. 5. p. 356] though a Papist, gives this character:--that he was from his childhood brought up in learning; and for his singular erudition was honoured with a degree in divinity; was a very eloquent man, and read in the scriptures, and fathers of the church. Hoornbeck [Summa Controvers. l. 5. p. 356] calls him a famous and eloquent preacher, and says he was the first of the reformed preachers at Waldshut. There were several disputations with others in the same year at this place; upon which an edict was made by the senate at Zurich, forbidding rebaptization, under the penalty of being fined a silver mark, and of being imprisoned, and even drowned, according to the nature of the offence. And in the year 1526, or 1527, according to Hoornbeck, Felix Mans, or Mentz, was drowned at Zurich; this man, Meshovius says [Meshov. l. 2. c. 1], whom he calls Felix Mantscher, was of a noble family; and both he and Conrad Grebel, whom he calls Cunrad Grebbe, who are said to

give the first rise to Anabaptism at Zurich, were very learned men, and well skilled in the Latin, Greek, and Hebrew languages. And the same writer affirms, that Anabaptism was set on foot at Wittenberg, in the year 1522, by Nicholas Pelargus, or Stork, who had companions with him of very great learning, as Carolostadius, Philip Melancthon, and others; this, he says, was done, whilst Luther was lurking as an exile in the castle of Wartburg in Thuringia; and that when he returned from thence to Wittenberg, he banished Carolostadius, Pelargus, More Didymus, and others [Mehosv. l. 1. c. 2,3], and only received Melancthon again. This carries the opposition to Pedobaptism, within five years of the Reformation, begun by Luther; and certain it is, there were many and great debates about infant baptism at the first of the Reformation, years before the affair of Munster; and evident it is, that some of the first reformers were inclined to have attempted a reformation in this ordinance, though they, for reasons best known to themselves, dropped it; and even Zwinglius himself, who was a bitter persecutor of the people called Anabaptists afterwards, was once of the same mind himself, and against Pedobaptism. But,

3. It will appear, that this was a matter of debate, and was opposed before the time of the reformation.

There was a set of people in Bohemia, near a hundred years before that, who appear to be of the same persuasion with the people called Anabaptists; for in a letter, written by Costelecus out of Bohemia to Erasmus, dated Oct. 10, 1519 [Inter Colomes. Collect. apud Wall's *History of Infant Baptism*, Part II. p. 200], among other things said of them, which agree with the said people, this is one: "such as come over to their sect, must every one be baptized anew in mere water;" the writer of the letter calls them Pyghards, so named, he says, from a certain refugee that came thither 97 years before the date of the letter. Pope Innocent the third, under whom was the Lateran Council, A.D. 1215, has, in the Decretals a letter, in answer to a letter from the bishop of Arles in Provence, which had represented to him [Opera Innocent. Tertii, Tom. II. p. 776. apud Wall, *ibid.* p. 178], that "some hereticks there had taught, that it was to no purpose to baptize children, since they could have no forgiveness of sins thereby, as having no faith, charity, &c." So that it is a clear point, that there were some that set themselves against infant baptism in the thirteenth century, three hundred years before the reformation; yea, in the twelfth century there were some that opposed Pedobaptism.

Mr. Fox, the Martyrologist, relates from the history of Robert Guisburne [*Acts and Monuments*, vol. i. p. 262], that two men, Gerhardus and Dulcinus in the reign of Henry the second, about the year of our Lord 1158: who, he supposes, had received some light of knowledge of the Waldenses, brought thirty with them into England; who, by the king and the prelates, were all burnt in the forehead, and so driven out of the realm; and after were slain by the pope. Rapin [*History of England*, vol. i. p. 233] calls them German hereticks, and places their coming into England, in the year 1166; but William of Newbury [Neubrigensis de Rebus Anglicanis, l. 2. c. 13. p. 155] calls them Publicans, and only mentions Gerhardus, as at the head of them, and whom he allows to be somewhat learned, but all the rest very illiterate, and says they came from Gascoigne; and being convened before a council, held at Oxford for that purpose; and being interrogated

concerning articles of faith, said perverse things concerning the divine sacraments, detesting holy baptism, the eucharist and marriage: and his Annotator Picardus, out of a MS. of Radulph, the monk, shews that the hereticks, called Publicans, affirm, that we must not pray for the dead; that the suffrages of the saints were not to be asked; that they believe not purgatory; with many other things; and particularly, *asserunt isti Parvulos von baptisandos donec ad intelliigibilem perveniant Aetatem*. "They assert that infants are not to be baptized, till they come to the age of understanding." [Not. in *ibid.* p. 720-723]

In the year 1147, St. Bernard wrote a letter to the Earl of St. Gyles, complaining of his harbouring Henry, a heretick; and among other things he is charged with by him, are these; "the infants of christians are hindered from the life of Christ, the grace of baptism being denied them; nor are they suffered to come to their salvation, though our Saviour compassionately cries out in their behalf, Suffer little children to come to me, &c." and about the same time, writing upon the Canticles in his 65th and 66th sermons, he takes notice of a sort of people, he calls Apostolici, and who, perhaps, were the followers of Henry; who, says he, laugh at us for baptizing infants [Wall, *ibid.* p. 165,176]; and among the tenets which he ascribes to them and attempts to confute, this is the first; "Infants are not to be baptized:" in opposition to which, he affirms, that infants are to be baptized in the faith of the church; and endeavours by instances to show, that the faith of one is profitable to others [Hist. Eccl. Magdeburg. Cent. XII, c. 5. p. 338,339]; which he attempts from Matt. 11:2 and 15:28, 1 Tim. 2:15.

In the year 1146, Peter Bruis, and Henry his follower, set themselves against infant baptism. Petrus Cluniacensis, or Peter the abbot of Clugny, wrote against them; and among other errors he imputes to them are these: "That infants are not baptized, or saved by the faith of another, but ought to be baptized, and saved by their own faith; or that baptism without their own faith does not save; and that those that are baptized in infancy, when grown up, should be baptized again; nor are they then rebaptized, but rather rightly baptized:" [Hist. Eccl. Magdeburg. Cent. XII. c. 5. p. 332] and that these men did deny infant baptism, and pleaded for adult baptism, Mr. Stennet [*Answer to Russen*, p. 83,84] has proved from Cassander and Prateolus, both Pedobaptists: and Dr. Wall [*History of Infant Baptism*, Part II, p. 184] allows these two men to be Antipedobaptists; and says, "they were the first Antipedobaptist preachers that ever set up a church, or society of men, holding that opinion against infant baptism, and rebaptizing such as had been baptized in infancy;" and who also observes [Ibid. p. 179], that the Lateran council, under Innocent the second, 1139, did condemn Peter Bruis, and Arnold of Brescia, who seems to have been a follower of Bruis, for rejecting infant baptism: moreover, in the year 1140, or a little before it, Evervinus, of the diocese of Cologn, wrote a letter to St. Bernard, in which he gives him an account of some hereticks lately discovered in that country, of whom he says, "they condemn the sacraments, except baptism only; and this only in those who are come to age; who, they say, are baptized by Christ himself, whoever be the minister of the sacraments: they do not believe infant baptism, alleging that place of the gospel, he that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved." [Wall, *ibid.* p. 172] These seem also to be the disciples of Peter Bruis, who began to preach about the year 1126; so that it is out of all doubt, that this was a matter of debate, four hundred years before the

madmen of Munster set themselves against it: and a hundred years before these, there were two men, Bruno, bishop of Angiers, and Berengarius, archdeacon of the same church, who began to spread their particular notions about the year 1035, which chiefly respected the sacraments of baptism and the Lord's Supper. What they said about the former, may be learned from the letter sent by Deodwinus, bishop of Liege, to Henry I. King of France; in which are the following words: [Apud Wall, *ibid.* p. 159]; -- "There is a report come out of France, and which goes through all Germany, that these two (Bruno and Berengarius) do maintain, that the Lord's body (the Host) is not the body, but a shadow and figure of the Lord's body; and that they do disannul lawful marriages: and as far as in them lies, over throw the baptism of infants:" and from Guimundus, bishop of Aversa, who wrote against Berengarius, who says, "That he did not teach rightly concerning the baptism of infants, and concerning marriage." [Hist. Eccl. Magdeburg. Cent. XI. c. 5. p. 116] Mr. Stennet relates from Dr. Allix, a passage concerning one Gundulphus and his followers in Italy; divers of whom, Gerard, bishop of Cambray and Arras, interrogated upon several heads in the year 1025: and among other things, that bishop mentions the following reason, which they gave against infant baptism; "because to an infant, that neither wills nor runs, that knows nothing of faith, is ignorant of its own salvation and welfare, in whom there can be no desire of regeneration or confession; the will, faith and confession of another seem not in the least to appertain." Dr. Wall, indeed, represents these men the disciples of Gundulphus, as Quakers and Manichees in the point of baptism, holding that water baptism is of no use to any: but it must be affirmed, whatever their principles were, that their argument against infant baptism was very strong. So then, we have testimonies that Pedobaptism was opposed five hundred years before the affair of Munster. And if the Pelagians, Donatists, and Luciferians, so called from Lucifer Calaritanus, a very orthodox man, and a great opposer of the Arians, were against infant baptism, as several Pedobaptist writers affirm; this carries the opposition to it still higher; and indeed it may seem strange, that since it had not its establishment till the times of Austin, that there should be none to set themselves against it; and if there were none, how comes it to pass that such a canon should be made in the Milevitan council, under Pope Innocent the first, according to Carrauza [Summa Concil. p. 122,123]; and in the year 402, as say the Magdeburgensian Centuriators [Cent. V. c. 9. p. 468]; or be it in the council at Carthage, in the year 418, as says Dr. Wall [History, &c. Part II. p. 172,276], which runs thus; "Also, it is our pleasure, that whoever denies that new-born infants are to be baptized; or says, they are indeed to be baptized for the remission of sins; and yet they derive no original sin from Adam to be expiated by the washing of regeneration; (from whence it follows, that the form of baptism for the forgiveness of sins in them, cannot be understood to be true, but false) let him be anathema:" but if there were none that opposed the baptism of new-born infants, why should the first part of this canon be made, and an anathema annexed to it? To say that it respected a notion of a single person in Cyprian's time, 150 years before this, that infants were not to be baptized until eight days old; and that it seems there were some people still of this opinion, wants proof. But however, certain it is, that Tertullian, [De Baptismo, c. 18] in the beginning of the third century, opposed the baptism of infants, and dissuaded from it, who is the first writer that makes mention of it: so it appears, that as soon as ever it was set on foot, it became matter of debate; and sooner than this it could not be: and

this was thirteen hundred years before the madmen of Munster appeared in the world.
But,

IV. Let us next consider the practice of the ancient Waldenses, with respect to adult baptism, which this author [of "The Divine Right of Infant Baptism"] affirms to be a chimerical imagination, and groundless figment. It should be observed, that the people called Waldenses, or the Vaudois, inhabiting the vallies of Piedmont, have gone under different names, taken from their principal leaders and teachers; and so this of the Waldenses, from Peter Waldo, one of their barbs, r pastors; though some think this name is only a corruption of Vallenses, the inhabitants of the vallies: and certain it is, there were a people there before the times of Waldo, and even from the apostles_ time, that held the pure evangelic truths, and bore a testimony to them in all ages, and throughout the dark times of popery, as many learned men have observed; and the sense of these people concerning baptism may be best understood [Dr. Allix_s *Remarks on the Ancient Churches of Piedmont*, p. 183,207,210,286. Morland_s *History of the evangelical churches of the vallies of Piiedmont*. B. 1. c. 3. p. 8, &c. Et Bezae Ieoues apud ibid. Introduction to the History, p. 7],

1. By what their ancient barbs or pastors taught concerning it. Peter Bruis, and Henry his successor, were both, as Morland affirms [History, B. 1. ch. 8. p. 184], their ancient barbs and pastors; and from them these people were called Petrobrusians and Henricians; and we have seen already that these two men were Antipedobaptists, denied infant baptism, and pleaded for adult baptism. Arnoldus of Brixia, or Brescia, was another of their barbs, and is the first mentioned by Morland, from whom these people were called Arnoldists. Of this man Dr. Allix says, [Remarks, &c. p. 171,172] that besides being charged with some ill opinions, it was said of him, that he was not sound in his sentiments concerning the sacrament of the altar, and the baptism of infants; and Dr. Wall allows, [History of Infant Baptism, Part II, p. 179] that the Lateran council, under Innocent the second, 1139, did condemn Peter Bruis, and Arnold of Brescia, who seems to have been a follower of Bruis, for rejecting infant baptism. Lollardo was another of their barbs, who, as Morland says, was in great reputation with them for having conveyed the knowledge of their doctrine into England, where his disciples were known by the name of Lollards; who were charged with holding, that the sacrament of baptism used in the church by water, is but a light matter, and of small effect; that christian people be sufficiently baptized in the blood of Christ, if their parents be baptized before them. [Fox_s *Acts and Monuments*, vol. i. p. 868] All which seem to arise from their denying of infant baptism, and the efficacy of it to take away sin.

2. By their ancient confessions of faith, and other writings which have been published. In one of these, bearing date A.D. 1120, the 12th and 13th articles run this: "We do believe that the sacraments are signs of the holy thing, or visible forms of the invisible grace; accounting it good, that the faithful sometimes use the said signs, or visible forms, if it may be done. However, we believe and hold, that the abovesaid faithful may be saved without receiving the signs aforesaid, in case they have no place, nor any means to use them. We acknowledge no other sacrament but baptism and the Lord_s Supper." [Morland_s History, &c. B. I. ch. 4. p. 34]

And in another ancient confession, without a date, the 7th article is: "We believe that in the sacrament of baptism, water is the visible and external sign, which represents unto us that which (by the invisible virtue of God operating) is within us; namely, the renovation of the Spirit, and the mortification of our members in Jesus Christ; by which also we are received into the holy congregation of the people of God, there protesting and declaring openly our faith, and amendment of life." [Morland_s History, p. 38]

In a tract, written in the language of the ancient inhabitants of the vallies, in the year 1100, called the Noble Lesson, are these words; speaking of the apostles it is observed of them, "they spoke without fear of the doctrine of Christ; they preached to Jews and Greeks, working many miracles, and those that believed they baptized in the name of Jesus Christ." [Ibid. ch. 6. p. 99,112]

And in a treatise concerning antichrist, which contains many sermons of the barbs, collected in the year 1120, and so speaks the sense of their ancient pastors before this time, stands the following passage: "The third work of antichrist consists in this, that he attributes the regeneration of the holy Spirit unto the dead outward work (or faith) baptizing children in that faith, and teaching, that thereby baptism and regeneration must be had, and therein he confers and bestows orders and other sacraments, and groundeth therein all his christianity, which is against the holy Spirit." [Ibid. ch. 7. p. 112,118]

There are indeed two confessions of theirs, which are said to speak of infant baptism; but these are of a late date, both of them in the sixteenth century; and the earliest is not a confession of the Waldenses or Vaudois in the vallies of Piedmont, but of the Mohemians, said to be presented to Ladislaus, king of Bohemia, A.D. 1508, and afterwards amplified and explained, and presented to Ferdinand king of Bohemia, A.D. 1435; and it should be observed, that those people say, that they were falsely called Waldenses; [Morland_s History, ch. 4. p. 43] whereas it is certain there were a people in Bohemia that came out of the vallies, and sprung from the old Waldenses, and were truly so, who denied infant baptism, as that sort of them called Pyghards or Picards; who, near a hundred years before the reformation, as we have seen by the letter sent to Erasmus out of Bohemia, rebaptized persons that joined in communion with them; and Scultetus, [Apud Hoornbeck. *Summa Controvers.* l. 5. p. 387] in his annals on the year 1528, says, that the united brethren in Bohemia, and other godly persons of that time, were rebaptized; not that they patronized the errors of the Anabaptists, (meaning such that they were charged with, which had no relation to baptism) but because they could not see how they could otherwise separate themselves from an unclean world. The other confession is indeed made by the ministers and heads of the churches in the vallies, assembled in Angrogue, Sep. 12, 1532. [Morland, *ibid.* ch. 4. p. 39] Now it should be known, that this was made after that "Peter Masson and George Morell were sent into Germany in the year 1530, as Morland says, to treat with the chief ministers of Germany, viz. Occolampadius, Bucer, and others, touching the reformation of their churches; but Peter Masson was taken prisoner at Dijon." However, as Fox says, Morell escaped, and returned alone to Merindol with the books and letters he brought with him from the churches of Germany; and declared to his brethren all the points of his commission; and opened unto them, how many great errors they were in; into the which their old ministers,

whom they called barbs, that is to say uncles, had brought them, leading them from the right way of true religion." After which, this confession was drawn up, signed, and swore to: from hence we learn where they might get this notion, which was now become matter of great debate in Switzerland and Germany; and yet after all this, I am inclined to think that the words of the article in the said confession, are to be so understood as not to relate to infant baptism: they are these: "We have but two sacramental signs left us by Jesus Christ; the one is baptism, the other is the eucharist, which we receive, to shew that our perseverance in the faith is such as we promised when we were baptized, being little children." This phrase, *being little children*, as I think, means their being little children in knowledge and experience, when they were baptized; since they speak of their receiving the eucharist, to shew their perseverance in the faith they then had promised to persevere in: besides, if this is to be understood of them as infants in a literal sense, what promise were they capable of making when such? Should it be said, that they promised by their sureties, it should be observed, that the Waldenses did not admit of godfathers and godmothers in baptism; this is one of the abuses their ancient barbs complained of in baptism, as administered by the papists. [Morland, *ibid.* c. 7. p. 173] Besides, in a brief confession of faith, published by the reformed churches of Piedmont, so late as A.D. 1655, they have these words in favour of adult baptism; "that God does not only instruct and teach us by his word, but has also ordained certain sacraments to be joined with it, as a means to unite us unto Christ, and to make us partakers of his benefits: and there are only two of them belonging in common to all the members of the church under the new testament; to wit, baptism and the Lord's supper; that God has ordained the sacrament of baptism to be a testimony of our adoption and of our being cleansed from our sins by the blood of Jesus Christ, and renewed in holiness of life:" [Ibid. c. 4. p. 61,67] nor is there one word in it of infant baptism.

Upon the whole, it will be easily seen what little reason the writer of the dialogue under consideration had to say, that the ancient Waldenses, being in the constant practice of adult baptism, is a chimerical imagination, and a groundless fiction; since there is nothing appears to the contrary, but that they were in the practice of it until the sixteenth century; for what is urged against it, is since that time: and even at that time there were some that continued in the practice of it; for Ludovicus Vives, who wrote in the said century, having observed, that "formerly no person was brought to the holy baptistry till he was of adult age, and when he both understood what that mystical water meant, and desired to be washed in it, yea, desired it more than once," adds the following words; "I hear in some cities in Italy, the old custom is still in a great measure preserved." [*Audio in quibusdam Italiae Urbibus morem veterem magna ex parte adhuc conservari.* Comment. in Aug. de Civ. Dei, Lib. I. c. 27] Now, what people should he mean by some cities of Italy, unless the remainders of the Petrobrussians, or Waldenses, as Dr. Wall observes, who continued that practice in the vallies of Piedmont: and it should be observed, that there were different sects that went by the name of Waldenses, and some of them of very bad principles; some of them were Manichees, and held other errors: and indeed it was usual for the papists in former times, to call all by this name that dissented from them; so that it need not be wondered at, if some, bearing this name, were for infant baptism, and others not. The Vaudois in the vallies, are the people chiefly to be regarded; and it will not be

denied, that of late years infant baptism has obtained among them: but that the ancient Waldenses practised it, wants proof.

But it will be necessary to say a little "concerning the mode of administering the ordinance of baptism, whether by immersion or by sprinkling."

The author of the dialogue under consideration affirms that there is not one single lexicographer or critic upon the Greek language, he has ever seen, but what agrees, that though the word *baptizo* sometimes signifies to *dip*, yet it also naturally signifies to *wash*; and that washing, in any mode whatsoever, is the native signification of the word *baptismos*; that the words *baptize* and *baptism*, (as used in the new testament) do not, from their signification, make dipping or plunging the necessary mode of administering the ordinance.

As to the lexicographers and critics on the Greek language, they agree that the word *baptizo* signifies, in its first and primary sense, to *dip* or *plunge*, and only in a secondary and consequential sense, to *wash*, but never to *pour* or *sprinkle*, there being no proper washing, but what is by dipping; and for this we appeal to all the writers of this kind, and even to those this author mentions.

Scapula, the first of them, renders *baptizo* by *mergo, seu immergo, ut quae tingendi, aut abluendi gratia aquae immergimus*, "to dip or plungs into, as what for the sake of dying or washing we dip into water;_ item *mergo, submergo, obruo aqua*, "also to plunge, plunge under, overwhelm in water;_ item *abluo, lavo*, also to wash off, wash;" and *baptizomai*, he renders, by *mergor, submergor*, "to be plunged, plunged under;" and observes, that it is used metaphorically for *obruor*, to be overwhelmed; and *baptismos*, and *baptisma*, he says, is *mersio, lotio, ablutio, ipse immergendi, item lavandi, seu abluendi actus*, "plunging, washing, ablution." In all which, he makes dipping, or plunging, to be the first and preferable sense of the words.

Stephens gives the same sense of the words, and so Schrevelius, who renders *baptizo, mergo lavo*, baptize, plunge, wash. Pasor only renders it *baptizo*, baptize, without determining its sense. And Leigh, in his *Critica Sacra*, observes, that "the nature and proper signification of it is, "to dip into water, or to plunge under water;" and refers to John 3:22,23; Matt. 3:16; Acts 8:38. And cites Casaubon, Bacanus, Bullinger, and Zanchy, as agreeing and testifying to this sense of it; and *baptisma*, he says, is "dipping into water, or washing with water." And these are the lexicographers and critics our author refers us to: to which I may add the lexicon, compiled by Budaeus, Constantine, and others, who render the word *baptizo*, by *immergo, mergo, intingo, lavacro tingo, abluo, madefacio, lavo, mundo*; plunge, plungs into, dip into, dip in a laver, wash off, make wet, wash, cleanse: and *baptismos*, they say, is *tingendi, hoc est mergendi, Actio, in quo significatu Tinctura dicitur*. "The action of tinging, that is, of plunging; in which signification it is called a tincture," or dying; and another by Hadrian Junius, who renders *baptizo*, by *immergo*, to plunge into; and *baptismos*, by *immersio, lotio, baptismus*, immersion, washing, baptism.

As for other critics on the Greek language, who assert, that the proper signification of the word *baptizo*, is to dip, or plunge; they are so numerous, that it would be tedious to reckon them up: I shall only mention a few of them, and their words. Calvin says, "*Ipsum baptizandi Verbum mergere significat, & mergendi Ritum veteri Ecclesie observatum fuisse constat*. The word, baptize, signifies to plunge; and it is plain that the rite of plunging was observed in the ancient church." Beza, who must be allowed to be a learned critic in the Greek language, says on Mark 7:4, "*Neque vero to baptizein, significat lavare, nisi a consequenti, nam proprie declarat tingendi Causa immergere*. Neither does the word *baptizo* signify to wash, unless consequentially; for it properly signifies, to plunge into, for the sake of tinging," or dying; and "on Matt. 3:11, he says, *significat autem to baptizein, tingere, quum para to baptein, dicatur, & quum tingenda mergantur*. The word *baptizo*, signifies to dip (as dyers in the Vatt) seeing it comes from *bapto*, to dip, and seeing things, that are to be dyed, are dipped." Casaubon, another great critic on the Greek language, has these words on Matt. 3:6, "*Hic enim fuit baptizandi Ritum ut in Aquas immergerentur, quod vel ipso Vox baptizein, declarat salis--unde intelligimus non esse ab re, quod jam pridem nonnulli dispatarant de toto Corpore immergendo in Ceremonia baptismi; vocem enim baptizein, urgebant*. For this was the rite of baptizing, that persons should be plunged into water, which the word *baptizo* sufficiently declares; hence, we understand, that it was not foreign from the matter, which some, sometime ago, disputed, concerning plunging the whole body in the ceremony of baptism; for they urged the signification of the word, *baptizo*." And, that this is the proper signification of the word, he observes, in his notes on Acts 1:5 and 2:4.

To which I shall only add one more critic, and that is Grotius; who, on Matt. 3:6, thus writes; "*Mersatione autem non perfusione agi solitum hunc Ritum indicat & Vocis proprietas, & Loca ad eum Ritum delecta*, (John 3:23; Acts 8:38) & *Allusiones multae Apostolorum quae ad Aspersione referri non possunt*, (Rom. 6:3; Col. 2:12). That this rite used to be performed by plunging, and not by pouring, both the propriety of the word, and the places chosen for this rite show, (John 3:23; Acts 8:38) and the many allusions of the apostles, which cannot be referring to sprinkling, (Rom. 6:3,4; Col. 2:12)." I might have here subjoined some instances of the use of the word in Greek authors, by which it appears to have the sense of dipping and plunging, and not of pouring or sprinkling; but this has been largely done by Dr. Gale and others.(D)

Wherefore, upon the whole, let the reader judge which is the most proper and significative rite, used in the administration of the ordinance of baptism; whether immersion, which is the proper and primary sense of the word baptism, and is confirmed to be the rite used, by the places in which baptism was administered; and by several scriptural instances and examples of it, as well as by allusive expressions; and which fitly represents the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ: or, sprinkling, which the word baptism never signifies, and is not confirmed by any of the said ways; nor does it represent any thing for which baptism is administered. Let it be therefore seriously considered, what a daring thing it is to introduce into this ordinance subjects which Christ never appointed, and a mode of administering it, never used by him or his apostles. In matters of worship, God is a jealous God. The case of Nadab and Abihu ought to be remembered by us, who offered strange fire which the Lord commanded not. In things

relating to religious worship, as this ordinance of baptism is a part of divine worship, we ought to have a direction from God, either a precept or a precedent: and we ought to keep to the rule, both as to matter and manner, and not dare to innovate in either, lest it should be said to us, Who hath required this at your hands? and become chargeable with will-worship, and with teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.

VOLUME I.

CHAPTER 1

A.D. 45 - 1180

It is generally supposed, that the gospel was introduced at a very early period into this country, which, at the commencement of the Christian era, was, like other heathen nations, full of the habitations of cruelty. Our forefathers were, if their own historians may be credited, gross idolaters, and were accustomed to offer up their prisoners taken in war, as sacrifices to their gods. It is said, they made a statue, or image of a man of a prodigious size, whose limbs consisted of twigs woven together after the manner of basketwork; this they filled with living men, and setting it on fire, burned them to death!

There are different opinions respecting the time when the gospel was first preached in Britain, and also by whom the message of salvation was at first proclaimed. Bishop Newton says, "There is some probability that the gospel was preached here by Simon the apostle; there is much greater probability that it was preached here by St. Paul; and there is absolute certainty that Christianity was planted here in the times of the apostles, before the destruction of Jerusalem."

Tacitus says, that "Pomponia Greacina, wife of Pautius, and Claudia Ruffina, a British lady, are supposed to be of the saints that were in Caesar_s household, mentioned by Paul, Phil. 3:22." Pautius was in Britain, A.D. 45: it is probable, Claudia may have returned with him; and it has been thought, from this statement of Tacitus, that this lady was the first British christian. Claudia is celebrated by Martial for her admirable beauty and learning, in the following epigram;

"From painted Britons how was Claudia [2 Tim. 4:21] born!
The fair barbarian! how do arts adorn!
When Roman charms a Grecian soul commend,
Athens and Rome may for the dame contend." [Rapin, vol. i, p. 14]

Speed, a very ancient British author, says, that _Claudia sent Paul_s writings, which he calls spiritual manna, unto her friends in Britain; to feed their souls with the bread of life: and also, the writings of Martial, to instruct their minds with those lessons best fitting to produce moral virtues:" which Speed thinks was the occasion of this line in Martial_s works--

"And Britain now (they say) our verses learn to sing." [p. 73]

Gildas, the most ancient and authentic British historian, who wrote about A.D. 564, in his book called *De Vict. Aurelli Ambrossii*, affirms, that the Britons received the gospel under Tiberius, the emperor under whom Christ suffered; and that many evangelists were sent from the apostles into this nation, who were the first planters of the gospel, and which, he elsewhere says, continued with them until the cruel persecution of Dioclesian the emperor, about A.D. 290.

Fuller, in his *Ecclesiastical History*, says, "It is generally agreed, that about the year 167, many pagan temples in Britain had their property altered, and that they were converted into Christian churches; particularly that dedicated to Diana in London, and another near it formerly consecrated to Apollo, in the city now called Westminster." [*Ecclesiastical History*, Book 1. p. 13]

This account is corroborated by Fox, the English martyrologist, who says, "Out of an ancient book of the antiquities of England, we find the epistle of Eleutherius, written to Lucius king of Britain, A.D. 169, who had written to Eleutherius for the Roman laws to govern by: in answer to which, Eleutherius says, _You have received, through God_s mercy, in the realm of Britany, the law and faith of Christ; you have with you both the parts of the scripture; out of them, by God_s grace, with the council of your realm, take ye a law, and by that law, by God_s sufferance, rule your kingdom of Britain." [Fuller, v. i. 117]

Hollingsworth mentions this epistle of Eleutherius, in such language as proves him to have understood the genuine principles of the gospel [Fuller, v. i. p. 25]; and speaks highly respecting king Lucius; of whom there is a curious piece of information on a brass plate in the church of St. Peter_s, Cornhill. This plate is included in an antique frame of oak, and relates as follows:

"Bee it knowne to all men that in the yeare of our Lorde God 179, Lucius the first Christian king of this Land, then called Britaine, Founded the first church in London: that is to say, the church of St. Peter upon Cornehill: and hee founded there an Archbishop_s See, and made that Church the Metropolitane and chiefe Church of this Kingdome, and so it endured the space of 400 yeares and more unto the coming of St. Austin the apostle of England. The which was sent into this land by St. Gregorie the Doctor of the Church in the time of King Ethelbert: And then was the Archbishop_s See and Pall removed from the foresaid Church of St. Peter upon Cornehill unto Dorobernia, that now is called Canterburie, and there it remaineth to this day, and Millet a Monke which came into this land with St. Austin, Hee was made first Bishop of London, and his See was made in Paul_s Church, and this Lucius King was the first founder of St. Peter_s Church upon Cornehill, and hee reigned King in this Land after Brute 1245, Yeares. And in the yeare of our Lorde God 124, Lucius was crowned King, and the yeares of his reigne were 77 yeares and hee was buried (after some Chronicles) at London: and after some Chronicles hee

was buried at Gloucester, in that place where the Order of St. Francis standeth now."

From the conversion of Lucius till the time of the persecution under Dioclesian, the ecclesiastical history of Britain is entirely unknown. That the Christian religion, however, made great progress during that interval of eight years, seems probable from Tertullian, Origen, Bede, and Gildas.

After Christianity was established by Constantine the great, it appears that Christians multiplied exceedingly, and that the island abounded with churches. This celebrated emperor being a native of Britain, as was also, according to Bishop Stillingfleet and some others, Helene, his mother, it is highly probable that he showed particular favour to his countrymen, by affording them his protection. Speed says, "Constantine the great was born and brought up here in Britain by queen Helene, a most virtuous and religious lady; unto whose days the succession of Christianity did here continue as by the martyrdom of many saints in the reign of Dioclesian, is apparent." [p. 77]

Some affirm there were British bishops at the council of Nice, A.D. 325. But though this cannot be fully proved, it is not at all unlikely, since twenty-two years after, there were certainly three British bishops at the council of Arles, who are supposed to have been those of London, York, and Caer-leon in Wales. There were also some at the council of Arminum in 359; but so poor, that their charges were borne by their brethren. Du Pin says, "The bishops of France and Britain chose rather to bear their own expences than accept of the emperor's allowance, which they thought it beneath them to do." [Rapin's *History of England*, p. 29]

About the year 448, the Saxons began to settle in Britain; and for more than a century were perpetually harassing the natives, till they forced them to retire from their country, and settle in Wales. Their cruelties are described in a very affecting manner by Bede and Gildas, the latter of whom says, "From the east to the west nothing was to be seen but churches burnt and destroyed to their very foundations. The inhabitants were extirpated by the sword, and buried under the ruins of their own houses. The altars were daily profaned by the blood of those slain thereon." [Rapin, p. 44] It is very unaccountable, that after this statement, he should blame the Britons for suffering their neighbours to live so long in paganism. How was it possible that they could, with any prospect of success, attempt to convert them, by whom they were so cruelly treated, and who were endeavouring to exterminate them?

After they were driven into Wales, whither their invaders could not follow them, religion began again to flourish. Two large societies were formed; one at Bangor in the north, the other at Caer-leon in the south. From the following account, it should seem that these institutions resembled that now formed by the Baptist missionaries at Serampore, where one fund is established, from which the wants of all, however differently engaged, are supplied.

Danvers informs us, that "In Bangor was a college containing 2100 Christians, who dedicated themselves to the Lord to serve him in the ministry as they became capable, to whom was attributed the name of the monks of Bangor. Yet did they no ways accord with the popish monks of that or the following age? for they were not reduced to any ecclesiastical order, but were for the most part laymen, who laboured with their hands, married and followed their callings: only some of them, whose spirits the Lord fitted and inclined to his more immediate service, devoted themselves to the study of the scriptures, and other holy exercises, in order, to the work of the ministry, who sent out many useful instruments." [Danvers, *History of Baptism*, p. 336]

In this state was religion in Wales, when Austin the monk was sent into England by Gregory the seventh, bishop of Rome, with the design of converting the Saxons, or English and bringing them into conformity to the church of Rome. To accomplish this, "Gregory ordered him not to pull down the idol temples, but convert them into Christian churches. The reason of this injunction was this; that the natives, by frequenting the same temples they had been always accustomed to, might be the less shocked at their entrance into Christianity: and therefore his Holiness directed that the idols should be destroyed, and those places of worship sprinkled with holy water." [Biog. Brit. Art. Augustin]

This was in the year 596, when Ethelbert was king of Kent. At his court, Augustin opened his mission, which was attended with such success, that the king, and his queen Bertha, and a great number of his subjects, very soon made a public profession of Christianity. The king was so zealous a convert, that he bequeathed his own palace to the church, and retired to Reculver, that Austin might be more at his ease at Canterbury. Notwithstanding all these favours, and the princely style in which he lived, this pious apostle could enjoy no content while the British clergy lived independent of his authority, and were not in a state of subjection to the bishop of Rome.

Independently, therefore, of the desire which Austin had to diffuse the knowledge of the gospel in general, we find he was particularly zealous for his own authority, and extremely desirous to subject the British Christians in the remote parts of the island to his metropolitan jurisdiction, and to the doctrine and discipline of the church of Rome. This circumstance is the more remarkable, as the British bishops of that age had more enlarged views of things; accordingly they disclaimed all submission to the church of Rome, and nobly asserted their independence.

The account of a conference which Austin held with some of the Christians of the college of Bangor, is thus related by Robert Fabian:

"By the helpe of Ethelberte he assembled and gathered the byshoppes, and doctours of Britayne that were before disparkled. The place of Assemble was called long after, Austin_s Oke; which is expounded to be Austeyn_s strengthe, and is in the march of Wikeris and of the west Saxons. In this place he charged the sayd bishoppes, that they should with him preach the worde of God to the Anglis; and also that they should amonge themselves amend certain errours, tehn used in the churche: and specially for kepeing

of their Easter tide, wher against the byshoppes of Britayne held opinion til Austanye shewed them a myracle by a blind Anglis or Saxon. After the which myracle shewed, the sayd byshoppes replied to the will of Austanye in that cause. But for all this, there was of them that said, that they might not leave the custome which they so longe had continued, without assente of all such as had used the same. Then he gathered a synode, to the which came seven byshoppes of Brytons with the wysest men of that famous abbey of Bangor. But first, they took counsel of an holy man, wher they should be obediente to Austanye or not. And he said, if ye find him humble, or meke, as to Christes disciple belongeth; that then they should asent to him, which mekenes they shoude perceave in him, if he at their coming into the synode, or councell, arose agayne them. When the sayde bishops entered the sayd synode, Austain sat styl in the chaire, and removed not: whereupon they were wroth and disdayned him and would not obey his requestes.

"He then sayd, Sins ye wol not asent to my hestes generally assent ye to me specially in iii things.

"The first is, that ye kepe Ester in due fourme and time as it is ordayned. The second, THAT YE GIVE CHRISTENDOME TO CHILDREN. And the thyrde is, that ye preache unto the Anglis the worde of God as aforetimes I have exhorted you. And all the other deale, I shall suffer you to amend and refourm within yourselves: *but they would not thereof.*

"Then Austayne sayd unto them, and warned them by manner of inspyration, That since they wold not receave peace of theyr brethren, they shoulde of other receave warre and wretche: the which was after put in experience by Ethelfridus King of Northumberland." [Fabian_s Chron. part v. p. 115,116]

Nicholson, in his *English Historical Library*, after exposing some pious frauds, says, "Bede_s account of the remonstrance of Dinoth, abbot of Bangor, against the pretensions of this legate Augustine, challenging a supremacy for his master, is of better credit. The critique of Bishop Stillingfleet on it deserves attention. "There is (he says) all the appearance of ingenuity and faithfulness that can be expected; and he [Bede] was a person of too great judgment and sagacity to be easily imposed upon by a modern invention, or a new formed schedule."

This account is confirmed by other ancient writers. Geoffrey of Monmouth tells us, that "in the country of the Britons Christianity flourished, which never decayed even from the apostles_ time; amongst whom, says he, was the preaching of the gospel, sincere doctrine, and living faith, and such form of worship as was delivered to the churches by the apostles themselves; and that they even to death withstood the Romish rites and ceremonies; and that as long as the British churches possessed the country, they kept

themselves sound in the faith, and pure in the worship, order, and discipline of Christ, as it was delivered to them from the apostles and evangelists." [Danvers, p. 334]

Fuller, in his *Ecclesiastical History* [Book ii, p. 69], has translated some verses of the ancient bard, Taliessin, recorded in the chronicle of Wales; which show how much they opposed Romish innovations.

"Wo be to the priest unborn,
That will not cleanly weed his corne
And preach his flock among;
Wo be to that shepherd, I say,
That will not watch his fold always,
As to his office doth belong.
Wo be to him that doth not keep,
From Romish wolves his sheep,
With staff and weapon strong."

Rapin is of opinion, that Austin died before the dreadful massacre of the Britons took place, but not till after he had baptized 10,000 Anglis in the river Swale, at the mouth of the Medway, on a Christmas day. Others think this was performed by Paulinas.

The account Fabian gives of the destruction of the Britons and of the monastery of Bangor is confirmed by Humphrey Lloyd, the learned Welch antiquary in his *Breviary of Britain*. "In Denbighshire (says he) near the castle of Holt, is seen the rubbish and reliques of the monastery of Bangor, while the glory of the Britons flourished: in the same were 2,000 monks very well ordered and learned, divided into seven parts, daily serving God; amongst whom those that were simple and unlearned, by their handy labour, provided meat and drink and apparel for the learned and such as applied themselves to their studies; and if any thing was remaining, they divided it among the poor. That place sent forth many hundred of excellent well learned men; amongst whom it also vomited forth to the world Pelagius. And afterward by the envy and malice of Austin, that arrogant monk, and the most cruel execution of his minister Ethelfrid, those worthy men were destroyed, the whole house from the very foundation, together with the library more precious than gold, was razed down, and demolished by fire and sword: and hence it is manifest, that this bloody massacre of those glorious witnesses for Christ did arise from their Christian courage and zeal against those antichristian impositions of the Romish church." [Danvers, p. 336]

It is probable that after this the Romish pontiff obtained the sovereign dominion in ecclesiastical affairs, as we find that Ina, one of the kings of the West Saxons, in the seventh century passed a law--"That every family possessed of goods to the value of twenty pence, should pay one penny a year to blessed St. Peter, and the church of Rome. He also prescribed a penalty for deferring the baptism of infants beyond thirty days, and a much greater when any died unbaptized." [Toulmin_s *History of Taunton*, p. 6] This tax continued to be paid for several centuries, and was known by the name of Peter_s pence.

From these few, but valuable fragments of the ancient Britons, we discover much of the genuine simplicity of Christianity. Making the scriptures the only rule of their faith and practice, they easily discovered the antichristian spirit of Austin, and the folly of those ceremonies which he strove to introduce. It is not at all wonderful, therefore, that they should refuse to give christendom to children, as they could find nothing in the scriptures to countenance such an opinion.

It is proved by Dr. Gill, that infant baptism, for the purpose of taking away original sin, had been enforced by anathemas in the Milevitan council about two centuries before; and it is also known that Gregory the great, who sent Austin into England, had decreed as follows: "Let all young children be baptized as they ought to be, according to the tradition of the fathers." [Fox, vol. i. p. 130]

From this decree being expressed in such general terms, infants not being particularly mentioned, we account for the difficulties which Austin himself had on the subject soon after he came to Britain. Among other interrogatories proposed to Gregory, is the following respecting children; "Lest they should be prevented by death, after how many days ought they to receive baptism?" To which Gregory replied, "If present necessity, arising from fear of death, doth so require, we do not forbid an infant to be baptized the same hour in which it is born." It is hardly conceivable that this question could have been proposed, had the practice of infant baptism been of apostolic origin, or if the English had not made some objections against it. This remark is further corroborated by a circumstance mentioned by Hogo Grotius in his Commentary on Matt. 19:14. "It is no small evidence (says he) that Infant baptism was not usually practised in the Greek church during many centuries, because not only Constantine the great, the son of Helene, who was a zealous Christian, was not baptized till he was of an advanced age; but that also Gregory Nazianzen, who was the son of a Christian bishop, and brought up for a long time by him, was not baptized till he came to years." If it be admitted that Infant baptism was then unknown in Britain, Constantine's not being baptized in his infancy is easily accounted for: but upon no other principle can we account for this omission of his godly parents, which Fox says they were.

In order to obtain as much light as possible on this very interesting subject, we subjoin the following statement of Dr. Calamy, the celebrated writer on Nonconformity, who in a work entitled, "God's concern for his glory in the British isles," has paid considerable attention to this subject. He relates, from Gildas, "That Christ shewing his bright light to all the world, afforded his rays, that is, his precepts, in the latter end of the reign of Tiberius Caesar, when his religion was propagated without any hindrance." On this statement of Gildas, the Doctor remarks,

"If he meant this, of the publication of the gospel in Britain, which has been the most prevailing opinion, we must allow him to have had better advantages for knowing this with certainty then, than we have at this distance. According to this account, this island had Christianity preached in it within five years of our Saviour's crucifixion, which was very early, perhaps too early, all circumstances considered, for a place that lay so

remote. All ancient writers, however, agree, that Christianity was planted in this land very soon, considering its distance from Judea.

"It is evident, that after Christianity obtained here, a great part of the inhabitants still continued pagans, and yet our holy religion made a progress. As it got ground, the temples of their ancient idols were some of them destroyed, and others of them dedicated to the true and living God. We have no account of such severities here in the primitive times against the followers of a crucified Jesus, as in other countries. That which was the last of the ten persecutions under the Roman emperors, seems to have been the first that affected this island. But in the general calamity, in the reign of Dioclesian and Maximian, about 303, the Christians here were very great sufferers. It is said, that Maximian almost rooted out the Christian religion from Britain, and that they who suffered martyrdom were almost beyond number. Gildas tells us, that their churches were thrown down, and all the books of holy scriptures that could be found, were burnt in the streets; and the chosen priests of the flock of our Lord, together with the innocent sheep, murdered. St. Alban of Verulam, and Julius of Carlisle upon Usk in Monmouthshire, and many others, sealed the truth with their blood.

"But when the storm was over, which did not last much above a year, the Christians here, as well as in other parts, fled out of the woods and dens and caves, where they had hid themselves, and rebuilt their demolished churches, and flourished to a great degree, both in peace and unity. They were much favoured by Constantius, the father of Constantine, who continued for the latter part of his life here in Britain, and would suffer no man to die for his religion in his dominions. It was here also that Constantine himself, who was a native of this island, first declared himself a Christian, or inclined that way, which it is not likely he would have publicly done, had not a good part of his army been of that religion; and upon his advancement to the imperial throne, it is not to be wondered at, if more splendour attended Christianity as it was here professed, than had been known before. But I have not, upon the strictest inquiry I have been able to make, hitherto been able to discern sufficient ground to apprehend, that from the beginning, churches or places of worship were so nobly adorned, or church government so modelled in this island, as some time after; or that the prelatical form of government was any part of that glory that was at first declared in this island.

"Britain (adds the Doctor) was also sadly infested with the Picts and Scots, which after various struggles, when no more help could be had from the Romans, was the occasion of calling in the Saxons to their assistance. These Saxons, whom Gildas calls, *'A nation odious to God and man,'* came hither to be a scourge to the Britons, about the year of Christ 450. They were at first received as guests, and treated as stipendiaries, in

opposition to the barbarians; but at length found themselves strong enough to set up for masters, laid the whole country waste, drove the old British Christians into the barren mountains of Wales, and occasioned such confusion and desolation, as Gildas, who wrote a few years after, thought could never be enough lamented. That writer describes their cruelties, and the judgment of heaven upon a sinful people, which they were the instruments of inflicting, in such a manner, as must needs affect all that read his account. He says, _that all the towns, with the beating of the rams, and all the townsmen, pastors, priests and people, with naked swords that glittered on all sides, and crackling flames, were together whirled to the ground._ And our historians say, that they scarcely left the face of Christianity where they prevailed. And yet pure religion was not even then extirpated from the island.

"Bede, who wrote his history about the year 731, gives us a great deal of light, though allowance must be made for his being himself a Saxon, and not very friendly to the British churches, and for his having a monastic tincture. Christianity, in a new edition of it, with great improvements as to outward pomp, was during this period received from Rome, through the hands of Austin the monk, about the year 598. But there was a purer Christianity in the island before, that was much freer from adulterations and corruptions than that which was now introduced under the same name. There were great contests between those of the old stamp, and those of the new. The former lived in Wales and Scotland, and the latter in the heart of the country. So that there were considerable debates on foot of this island, between Conformists and Nonconformists, in ancient as well as in modern times; and the one sort were apt to carry it with a high hand, and the other forced to be satisfied with the consciousness of their own integrity then as well as now. The Conformists then were, in all things, for the methods of the church of Rome; and the Nonconformists were for the ways and methods of the ancient Christians, and disowned impositions. They were called too, the *Schismatics* of Britain and Ireland; because they would not receive the Romish alterations, nor submit to the authority by which they were imposed.

"In the year 601, Austin called a synod, to which the bishops or doctors of the next province of the Britons were summoned, in which the abbot of Bangor gave him a free answer to his demand of conformity to Rome. He told him _that the ancient Christians of this island were obedient and subject to the church of God, and to the pope of Rome, and every godly Christian; to love every one in his degree, in perfect charity; and to help every one of them by word and deed, which were the children of God: And other obedience than this he knew not to be due to him whom he called the pope, etc._ Many of the poor monks, not long after, lost their lives in return for this freedom and resolution." [Dr. Calamy, "God's concern for his glory in the British isles"]

Having related the great contest respecting Easter, Dr. Calamy thus proceeds; "It ought not to be forgotten that the difference between these old Conformists and Nonconformists did not lie only in the time of keeping Easter: They differed also about baptism. For that was one of the three things which Austin insisted on in his conversation with the British doctors; that they should for the future administer baptism after the manner of the church of Rome, which is an argument they did use to do so before."

Fearing, as it should seem, that this candid statement would make an impression on the minds of his readers, that these ancient British Nonconformists were also Baptists, the doctor proceeds to make some comments upon it "Wherein the difference," says he, "between the old Britons and the Romans properly lay about baptism, is not so evident. Pits frankly owns he did not know what it was. Nor does Bede explain it, nor any of our ancient writers that I have conversed with. Some have thought they differed about the *subjects* of baptism; and that whereas the Romans baptized infants, the Britons were against infant baptism; and an argument has been drawn from thence by the Anti-pedobaptists. But an answer is returned to it by Dr. Wall, in his History of Infant Baptism, where he says that _Pelagius being a native of Britain, his declaring he never heard of any Christian, catholic, or sectary, that denied infant baptism, is a good evidence that his countrymen did not do it._ It seems more likely that this difference should have been about the *mode* of baptism; and the very words of Austin, as Bede relates the matter, seem to look that way. For he would have them administer baptism, for the future, after the manner of the church of Rome. Now I know nothing so remarkable (continues Dr. Calamy,) in the manner of baptizing in the church of Rome at that time, as the trine immersion. That this was customary in that church is asserted by Walafridus Strabo; and though we have no positive evidence that I know of, that a single immersion, or aspersion, or pouring of water, was used among the ancient Britons in their baptism; yet till something else is mentioned, with a surer appearance of probability, I am inclined to believe this was the matter of that part of the difference."

This interesting statement by Dr. Calamy, and his reflections upon it, require some animadversion.

He acknowledges, that there is no positive evidence that the Britons used single immersion, aspersion, or pouring, in their baptism; but takes it for granted that one of these must have been the mode, in order to justify the alteration proposed by Austin. But why does he speak of aspersion, and of pouring? We know from incontrovertible evidence, that they used immersion. Austin baptized in a river; "where," says Mr. Fox, "note by the way, gentle reader, at that time there could be no use of fonts." Immersion, therefore, being the mode then used, it should seem, according to the foregoing hypothesis, that the point at issue between Austin and the Britons was, whether baptism should be performed by a single or a trine immersion. This hypothesis, however, is inadmissible, being as improbable as it is unsupported. But let it be admitted that Austin's proposal was to baptize infants, after the manner of the church of Rome, instead of baptizing adults on a profession of faith; and then the proposition will, on the one hand, be suitable for the pope's legate to make, as an indispensable requisite to a union with the catholic church, which could not exist without it; and, on the other hand, it will

appear to be an absurdity so great, that primitive Christians could not submit to it, without a sacrifice of principle and of conscience, to which even death itself was preferable.

[Note: It appears obvious from the very face of Austin's request to the British Christians that he was urging them to adopt infant baptism. He requested three things, the second of which was "that ye give Christendom to children." That request would have made no sense had the British Christians been in the custom of baptizing infants by any mode whatsoever. D.W. Cloud]

The only objection which Dr. Calamy makes to this is, a partial quotation from Dr. Wall. But if the whole of what the latter says had been stated, it would have appeared that this objection had no weight. The words of Pelagius, as translated by Dr. Wall, are, "That men do slander him, as if he denied the sacrament of baptism to infants, and did promise the kingdom of heaven to any persons without the redemption of Christ, which he had never heard, no not even any impious heretic or sectary say." By these words, it is true, Dr. Wall understands Pelagius to mean, "that he had never heard of any Christian, catholic or sectary, that denied infant baptism." But does Pelagius mean this? I think not. His meaning seems to have been, that he had never heard, no, not even any impious heretic or sectary say, that the kingdom of heaven could be obtained without the redemption of Christ. The suspicion of his denying infant baptism seems to have arisen from his denying original sin; for the church of Rome had appointed infant baptism, to wash away original sin, and had decreed that without it none could be saved.

This misapprehension of Pelagius by Dr. Wall is the only thing which has been made use of to disprove the opinion of the Baptists, that the ancient British christians were of similar sentiments with themselves.

If Austin's proposal to the British christians was, that they should give christendom to children after the manner of the church of Rome, I should understand it to mean that they should christen children, as the church of Rome did. But the words, "after the manner of the church of Rome," are not in the copy of Fabian at the London institution: the proposition of Austin is there said to have been, that they should give christendom to children. Dr. Wall indeed says that the proposition as he has related it is in a copy of Fabian at Oxford; and he also represents Mr. Wills as saying that Fabian professes in his preface to have copied it from Bede, though the doctor adds that he had not seen it. There is, however, an internal evidence, that the proposition respected the subjects of baptism, and that the words, "after the manner of the church of Rome," were added by the historian, or by some one of his copiers, and did not constitute a part of the original proposition. For if the original proposition had only respected a mode of baptism, why should any thing have been said concerning the subjects of it? It had been sufficient to have proposed to give christendom after the manner of the church of Rome, without saying anything about giving it to children. Whereas if the difference between the church of Rome and the British churches respected the subjects of baptism, and the proposition was that christendom should be given to children, it was natural for the historian to add that this was after the manner of the church of Rome.

To conclude; till something better be offered to disprove our inference from the above-mentioned premises, that these primitive Christians knew nothing of infant baptism, we shall continue to consider them, as being in sentiment and practice, what our opponents call us--Antipedobaptists.

VOLUME I.

CHAPTER 2

A.D. 1180 - 1540

The darkness which succeeded the introduction of popery was so prevalent, that, excepting the valleys of Piedmont, which were the residence of the Waldensian churches, it soon spread over the whole of Europe, and rendered invisible every trace of the simplicity of the gospel of Christ.

THE WALDENSIAN CHRISTIANS are celebrated in history for their opposition to the antichristian usurpations of the church of Rome. The learned archbishop Usher, in his book entitled *The succession and state of the Christian Churches* [p. 242], traces its succession through them, in distinction from and in opposition to the papacy. They underwent the most dreadful persecutions; and every means which malice and cruelty could invent was used to exterminate them and their principles from the earth. The crusade against them consisted of five hundred thousand men. More than three hundred gentlemen's seats were razed and many walled towns destroyed.

The persecutions, however, which they suffered were far from accomplishing the design of their enemies. The archbishop says, that "as the persecution about Stephen by that dispersion proved much for the furtherance of the gospel in other parts of the world, so was it here: for those that were not so fit for the war went up and down with more freedom into most parts of Europe. Insomuch that Aeneas Sylvius, afterwards Pope Pius II, confessed, that neither the decrees of popes, nor armies of Christians, could extirpate them."

The archbishop farther informs us, on the authority of Matthew Paris of Westminster, that "the Berengarian or Waldensian heresy had, about the year 1180, generally infected all France, Italy, and England." Guitmond, a popish writer of that time, also says, that "not only the weaker sort in the country villages, but the nobility and gentry in the chief towns and cities, were infected therewith; and therefore Lanfranc, archbishop of Canterbury, who held this see both in the reigns of William the conqueror and of his son William Rufus, wrote against them in the year 1087." The archbishop adds, from Poplinus's history of France, that "the Waldenses of Aquitaine did, about the year 1100, during the reigns of Henry I and Stephen, kings of England, spread themselves and their doctrines all over Europe," and mentions England in particular. [Danvers on baptism, p. 175-178]

We learn from Fox, on the authority of Robert Gulsborne, that in the time of Henry II, about the year 1158, two eminent Waldensian preachers and barbs, Gerhardus and Dulcinus, came into England to propagate the gospel; and archbishop Usher, from Thomas Walden, says, that "several Waldenses that came out of France were apprehended, and by the king's command were marked in the forehead with a key or hot iron." "Which sect, (says William of Newbury, in his history of England,) were called the Publicani, whose original was from Gascoyne; and who, being as numerous as the sand of the sea, did sorely infest both France, Italy, Spain, and England."

Rapin, in relating the transactions of the councils of Henry II, gives the following account of these people, on the authority of the above-mentioned historian. "Henry ordered a council to meet at Oxford in 1166, to examine the tenets of certain heretics, called Publicani. Very probably they were disciples of the Waldenses, who began then to appear. When they were asked in the council, who they were; they answered, they were Christians, and followers of the apostles. After that, being questioned upon the creed, their replies were very orthodox as to the trinity and incarnation. But, (adds Rapin,) if the historian is to be depended on, they rejected baptism, the eucharist, marriage, and the communion of saints. They shewed a great deal of modesty and meekness in their whole behaviour. When they were threatened with death, in order to oblige them to renounce their tenets, they only said, Blessed are they that suffer for righteousness sake." [*History of England*, vol. i. p. 350]

There is no difficulty in understanding what were their sentiments on these heretical points. When a monk says they rejected the eucharist, it is to be understood that they rejected the absurd doctrine of transubstantiation; when he says that they rejected marriage, he means that they denied it to be a sacrament, and maintained it to be a civil institution; when he says that they rejected the communion of saints, nothing more is to be understood than that they refused to hold communion with the corrupt church of Rome; and when he says that they rejected baptism, what are we to understand but that they rejected the baptism of infants? These were the errors for which they were branded with a hot iron in their foreheads, by those who had "the mark of the beast, both in their foreheads and in their hands."

Paul Stransky, *de Republica Bohemorum*, p. 272, (as quoted by David Cranz in his *History of the United Brethren*, translated by La Trobe, p. 16,) says, "the Waldenses, in 1176, arrived in Bohemia, and settled at Satz and Laun on the river Eger. These joined those Bohemians, who were still tenacious of the rites of the Greek church. They showed them the defects of their religious exercises; and introduced among them a purer knowledge of the doctrines of the Christian faith, according to the word of God. By this means the upright were confirmed in the faith, and such as were fallen asleep, again awakened."

"These ancient Christians," says Cranz, after having made the above quotation, "(who, besides the several names of reproach given them, were at length denominated Waldenses, from one of the their most eminent teachers PETER WALDUS who is said to have emigrated with the rest from France into Bohemia, and there to have died) date their

origin from the beginning of the fourth century; when one Leo, at the great revolution in religion under Constantine the Great, opposed the innovations of Sylvester, bishop of Rome. Nay, Rieger goes farther still, taking them for the remains of the people of the Vallies, who, when the apostle Paul, as is said, made a journey over the Alps into Spain, were converted to Christ.

"The testimony of their enemies themselves (continues Cranz) seems to corroborate this conjecture. Sancho Reinerus, an apostate, and persecutor of the Waldenses in the thirteenth century, writes, _Amongst all sects, none is more pernicious than that of the Poor of Lyons (which is another denomination of the Waldenses) for three reasons: 1. Because it is the most ancient. Some aver their existence from the days of Sylvester; others, from the very time of the Apostles. 2. Because it is so universal; for there is hardly a country into which this sect has not crept. 3. Because all others render themselves detestable by their blasphemies; but this has a great appearance of godliness, they living a righteous life before men, believing right concerning God, confessing all the articles of the creed, only hating the pope of Rome, etc."

"This, (says Cranz) continued above two hundred years, till 1391, when, being discovered through the imprudence of two of their preachers, they were cruelly persecuted, and, for the most part, dispersed abroad in the adjacent countries. Yet many witnesses of the truth remained in Bohemia; who, not only in private, but in the churches and schools, and in the very court-chapel at Prague, testified against the corruption in doctrine and practice, which now broke in more and more like a torrent; to which they were farther greatly encouraged by the writings of Wickliffe, brought from England by the young noblesse who studied there."

Roger de Hovedon, in his *Annals*, says, that in the year 1182, "Henry II was very favourable to the Waldensian sect in England; for whereas they burnt them in many places of Flanders, Italy, and France, in great numbers, he would not suffer any such thing here; and being in his own and his queen's right possessed of Aquitain, Poitou, Guien, Gascoyne, Normandy, etc. the principal places inhabited by the Waldenses and Albigenses, and they being his subjects, they had free egress into his territories here."

During the reigns of Richard I and king John, which were times of great trouble, we read of no opposition made against them. Richard was long absent in the holy war. John had great contests with the pope, who laid his kingdom under an interdict, and forbad all public worship for the space of six years, only admitting of private baptism to infants. This, with the opposition made to him by the barons, found him so much employment, that these Christians had no molestation, but had great opportunities for disseminating their principles; while the king by his arms defended the Waldenses and Albigenses in Aquitain and Gascoyne, who were so much oppressed by the crusading army of the pope.

In the reign of Henry III, archbishop Usher says, from Matthew Paris, "the orders of the Friars Minorites came into England to suppress this Waldensian heresy." And in the reign of Edward III, about the year 1315, Fuller informs us, in his ecclesiastical history, that "WALTER LOLLARD, that German preacher, or, (as Perrin calls him in his history of

the Waldenses,) one of their barbs, came into England, a man in great renown among them; and who was so eminent in England that, as in France they were called *Berengarians* from Berengarius, and *Petrobrusians* from Peter Bruis, and in Italy and Flanders, *Arnoldists*, from the famous Arnold of Brescia; so did the Waldensian Christians for many generations after bear the name of this worthy man, being called *Lollards*."

As this is an historical fact of great importance for discovering the origin of those sentiments which at length produced a reformation in the kingdom, and an emancipation from the church of Rome, it is very desirable TO ASCERTAIN THE OPINION OF THESE ZEALOUS CHRISTIANS ON THE QUESTION OF INFANT BAPTISM, since it will furnish us with a clue by which to judge of the principles of those who were afterwards such eminent asserters of Christian liberty.

If the reader will turn to what is said by Dr. Gill on this subject, in the extracts prefixed to this work, he will find the opinion of William of Newbury (as recited by Rapin) confirmed, respecting their denial of baptism; that is, of infant baptism.

In addition to these proofs may be mentioned what is said by Chessanion, in his *History of the Albigenses*, who (he says) were of the same sentiments. "Some writers, (says he,) affirm that the Albigenses approved not the baptism of infants; others that they entirely slighted this holy sacrament, as if it were of no use either to great or small. The same may be said of the Waldenses, though some affirm that they have always baptized their children. This difference of authors kept me some time in suspense before I could come to be resolved on which side the truth lay. At last considering what St. Bernard saith of this matter in his sixty-sixth homily on the second chapter of the Song of Songs, and the reasons he brings to refute this error, and also what he wrote *ad Hildefonsum Comitem sancti Aegidii*, I cannot deny but the Albigenses for the greatest part were of this opinion. And that which confirms me yet more in this belief is, that in the history of the city of Treves there were some who denied that the sacrament of baptism was available to the salvation of infants: and one Catherine Saube, who was burnt at Montpelier, in the year 1417, for being of the mind of the Albigenses in not believing the traditions of the Romish church, was of the same mind respecting infant baptism; as it is recorded in the register of the town-house of the said city of Montpelier, of which we shall speak at the end of the fourth book. The truth is, (continues Chessanion) they did not reject the sacrament, and say it was useless, but only counted it unnecessary to infants, because they are not of age to believe, nor capable of giving evidence of their faith. That which induced them, as I suppose, to entertain this opinion is, what our Lord says, He that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved, and he that believeth not, shall be damned." [Stennett_s Answer to Russen, pp. 79,184]

This statement is in part at least corroborated by Dr. Wall in his *History of infant baptism*; and, as he was desirous of establishing the contrary opinion, his concessions in our favour are certainly of weight. Speaking of the Petrobrussians, whom he calls a sect of the Waldenses, he says, "withdrawing themselves, about the year 1100, from the communion of the church of Rome, which was then very corrupt, they did reckon Infant

Baptism as one of the corruptions, and accordingly renounced it, and practised only adult baptism._ [Part II, chap. 10, p. 527]

Mosheim, in his *Ecclesiastical History*, speaking of Peter de Bruis, who was a celebrated itinerant preacher, and who was burnt to death by an enraged populace at St. Giles_s, in the year 1130, says, "It is certain that one of his tenets was, that no persons whatever were to be baptized before they were come to the full use of reason." [Vol. III, p. 116]

The testimony of Mr. Brandt respecting the antiquity of these churches and of their sentiments respecting baptism is of importance to our argument. He says that "the errors and crafty inventions of popery, had never been able to find a passage to those people; since being shut up in their vallies, separate from the rest of the world, and conversing chiefly among themselves, they had retained a great deal of the simplicity and purity of the Apostolical doctrine. That this antiquity of the doctrine of the Waldenses, is acknowledged even by their greatest enemies.--Some of them likewise rejected infant baptism." [Brandt_s *Hist. Ref.* vol. I. Book I. p. 12]

To corroborate this last clause many things are produced by Dr. Allix in his remarks on the ancient churches of Piedmont. "The followers of Gundulphus in Italy were many of them examined by Gerhard bishop of Cambray and Arras upon several heads in th eyar 1025. It seems as if these people were surfeited with the vicious and debauched lives of the Romish Clergy, and did rather chuse to go without any baptism, rather than have it administered by such lewd hands, or that they had agreed to have it performed privately in their own way. Let things have been as it would it is plain they were utterly against infant baptism." The citation, in part of their answer, as taken by Dr. Allix out of Gerhard_s preface to Reginaldus, is this, "But if any shall say, that some sacrament lies hid in baptism, the force of that is taken off by these three causes; the first is, because the reprobate life of ministers can afford no saving remedy to the persons to be baptized. The second, because whatsoever sins are renounced at the font, are afterwards taken up again in life and practice. The third, because a strange faith, and a strange confession do not seem to belong to, or be of any advantage to a little child, who neither wills nor runs, who knows nothing of faith, and is altogether ignorant of his own good and salvation, in whom there can be no desire of regeneration, and from whom no confession of faith can be expected."

The doctor adds the following quotation from an Inquisitor. "They condemn the sacraments of the church because of the undue and irreverent manner wherein they are celebrated by the priests, and became they set them to sale, as also, because of the wicked and scandalous lives of many ministers." In the next paragraph the same Inquisitor lets us know the ground of this error (as he calls it) about infant baptism. "Some of them are in error concerning baptism, holding that infants cannot be saved by it, Mark xvi. 16, whosoever shall believe, and be baptized shall be saved. But an infant does not believe, therefore is not saved."

In a little time after this lived the noted Arnoldus Brixienis, a follower of Berengarius, who eminently opposed the Romish corruptions. And amongst some notions imputed to

him, it is observed, "There was yet a more heinous thing laid to his charge, which was this; that he was unsound in his judgment about the sacrament of the altar and infant baptism." [Dr. Allix, p. 293,123,172]

This excellent man was condemned, hanged, and his body burnt at Rome, and the ashes cast into the Tiber. But there is a letter of Everinus to St. Bernard a little before the year 1146, wherein he speaks clearly of a sect which approved of adult baptism upon believing, and strenuously opposed infant baptism. The words of the letter are, "They make void the priesthood of the church and condemn the sacraments besides baptism only, and this only in those who were come to age, who they say are baptized by Christ himself, whosoever be the ministers of the sacraments. They do not believe infant baptism, alleging that the place of the gospel, whosoever shall believe and be baptized, shall be saved." [Dr. Allix, p. 143,145,147]

The same learned gentleman gives us an extract taken by Claudius Caissord in the year 1548, out of an old MS. of Rainerius a fryer, wrote by him 296 years before, against the Waldenses wherein he has these words, "They say, that when first a man is baptized then he is received into this sect. Some of them hold, that baptism is of no advantage to infants, because they cannot actually believe." [Ibid., p. 188,191]

There seems to me to be reason to believe that the Lollards in England were of similar sentiments on this subject. Walter Lollard from whom they sprung, was a Waldensian barb; and I have never seen any satisfactory proof that infant baptism was practised among these Christians at this early period of their history. These, it is likely, were the first public opposers of the corruptions of the church of Rome in England, after the fatal massacre of the ancient British Christians under the direction of the pope's legate, Austin, who has been flattered with the epithet of the English Apostle, and canonized as a Saint by the church of Rome.

But to return to the Britons. It might be presumed that some of their descendants, either in Wales, or upon the borders of it, that is to say, in Herefordshire and the adjoining counties, would for some ages maintain the same principles with themselves. This presumption accords with fact; for the most early and most eminent Christians in England, after the conquest, are said to have been born in this part of the island. These were Bradwardine, Brute, Sir John Oldcastle, Tyndal, Penry, and others, whose histories we shall briefly relate in the course of our work. For this information we are indebted to *A History of the Welsh Baptists*, published by Mr. Joshua Thomas of Leominster, from which we shall extract interesting particulars on this subject.

In this account of the Baptist church of Olchon, and Chapel-y-ffin, Mr. Thomas says, "Olchon is a deep narrow valley, under the black mountain, in the parish of Cludock, and properly in Herefordshire; yet on the borders of the three counties of Hereford, Monmouth, and Brecknock; and likewise on the borders of the three dioceses of Hereford, Llandaff, and St. David's. The inhabitants of that and most of the adjoining parishes were Cambro-britons, or properly Cymry, vulgarly called Welsh or Welch, till of

late years; and even now, many in those parts talk the British language, and most of the natives understand it. The ministry of the Baptists now there is in that language.

"I am inclined to believe (continues Mr. Thomas) that through all the darkness of popery, there were individuals here and there among the ancient Britons, who had saving knowledge of Christ; though they had not sufficient courage to appear publicly against the growing corruptions of the Romish church. It is my opinion that the first open struggle of Protestant light against Popish darkness, among our countrymen, began at or near Olchon; and that long before the appellation of Protestant was known even in Germany. My conjectures spring from the following particulars,--

"Dr. Thomas Bradwardine was chosen Archbishop of Canterbury: he was a very learned and celebrated person in the former part of the fourteenth century. Dr. Fuller in his Church History, book iii. p. 98, says, that this worthy man was born at Bradwardine, and appears to have had his name from that place, as in former centuries it was very common for persons to take their names from the place of their birth, occupation, or habitation. Bradwardine is the name of a parish in Herefordshire, a few miles from Olchon. The word carries it in an internal evidence of its British original; but I will not pretend to guess to what particular circumstance it owed its origin. Bishop Godwin, contrary to Fuller, says that Dr. Bradwardine was born at Hartfield in Sussex. But before the latter had written his account of the worthies of England, he had received better information, for he there says that Camden, Bale, Pits, and Godwin, all differed respecting the place of Bradwardine's birth. These differences he endeavours to reconcile by saying that there was an ancient family at Bradwardine in Herefordshire, which removed thence, and had settled for three generations in Sussex, near Chichester; and that the above Thomas was born in or near that city. Hence he names him among his worthies of Herefordshire and of Sussex. He names a Thomas Bradwardine among the gentry of Herefordshire in 1433; so that it seems there were some of the family then at Bradwardine. Dr. Bradwardine was very famous for his profound and extensive erudition, and genuine piety. His common title was *Doctor Profundus*, the profound Doctor. Of all his writings, that which he wrote against the Pelagians is the most celebrated. Its title is, *De Causa Dei, Of the cause of God*. Dr. Gill, in his *Cause of God and truth*, refers to Bradwardine more than once, and calls him a second Austin. This commendation is great; but he did not make a formal opposition to popery as such. Though he was much abroad, yet possibly he might be of some service to his distant relations about Bradwardine and towards Olchon, by writing or otherwise. How far he was useful that way we know not. He died about 1348 or 9. Rapin, speaking of this eminent person, says, that _what rendered him still more esteemed for his learning was his humility, and his zeal to instruct the people committed to his care._

"Very probably (continues Mr. Thomas) the famous Wickliffe received much of his light in the gospel from Bradwardine. When the latter died, he was succeeded in the see of Canterbury by Dr. Simon Islip, in 1349. Islip had so great a regard for Wickliffe, that he made him rector of Canterbury College then at Oxford. The rector preached and kept his place with great reputation till 1306, when Archbishop Islip died. Then Wickliffe was

turned out of his rectory. After that he openly opposed popery, and had powerful friends to defend him against all the rage of the pope and clergy."--Thus far Mr. Thomas.

It is very probable that Bradwardine, Islip, and Wickliffe, received their sentiments from the followers of Lollard; and that on this account the followers of Wickliffe are indiscriminately denominated Wickliffites and Lollards. Bishop Newton, having mentioned the Lollards, says, "There was a man more worthy to have given name to the sect, the deservedly famous John Wickliffe, the honour of his own and the admiration of all succeeding times."

This extraordinary man, who has been justly called the morning star of the Reformation, began to be famous about the year 1361; and though he was greatly persecuted by several popes, and by the clergy in England, yet the providence of God so protected him from their malice, that he died peaceably at his own house at Lutterworth, Dec. 31, 1384. By the command of the pope his bones were taken out of the grave and burnt, and his ashes cast into a brook adjoining, called the Swift, in 1428.

The doctrines of Wickliffe spread very wonderfully through the land, if the testimony of Knyhton, a contemporary historian, who appears to have been his inveterate enemy may be believed. "Such (says he) was the success of his teaching, preaching, and writings, that more than half the people of England became his followers, and embraced his doctrines." Their character is thus given by Reinhar, a popish writer. "The disciples of Wickliffe are men of a serious modest deportment, avoiding all ostentation in dress, mixing little with the busy world, and complaining of the debauchery of mankind. They maintain themselves wholly by their own labour, and despise wealth, being fully content with bare necessities. They are chaste and temperate; are never seen in taverns, or amused with the trifling gaieties of life; yet you find them always employed, either in learning or teaching. They are concise and devout in their prayers, blaming an unanimated prolixity. They never swear; speak little; and in their public preaching lay the principal stress on charity."

It was not long after the death of Wickliffe, that his disciples began to form distinct societies. Rapin says, that "in the year 1389, the Wickliffites or Lollards began to separate from the church of Rome, and appoint priests from amongst themselves to perform divine service after their way. Though some were from time to time persecuted by the bishops, yet these persecutions were not rigorous. Their aim seemed to be only to hinder them from pleading prescription. Besides, a petition presented to the king by a former parliament to revoke the power granted the bishops to imprison hereticks restrained the most forward." [*History of England*, vol. i, p. 480]

It is probable that the liberty granted to these early dissenters from the church of England, as then established, depended in a great measure on the disposition of the monarch, and on his ability to check the cruel dispositions of the pope and the clergy. It appears evident from the history of the English church, that whenever the clergy have been left to follow their own inclinations, they have used their crosier, not in defending the flock, but in giving the followers of Christ cause to say, "For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter."

The sufferings of these people from this period till the Reformation were very great. The Lollards_ tower still stands as a monument of their miseries, and of the cruelty of their implacable enemies. This tower is at Lambeth palace, and was fitted up for this purpose by Chicheley, Archbishop of Canterbury, who came to this see in 1414. It is said that he expended two hundred and eighty pounds to make this prison for the Lollards. The vast staples and rings to which they were fastened, before they were brought out to the stake, are still to be seen in a large lumber-room at the top of the palace, and ought to make protestants look back with gratitude upon the hour which terminated so bloody a period.

That the sentiments of Wycliffe and his followers were opposed to infant baptism, may be ascertained from several sources of information. It is well known that after the death of the pious queen Anne, wife of Richard II., and sister of Wenceslaus, king of Bohemia, the books of Wickliffe were carried into Bohemia by her attendants, as they also were about the same time by Jerome of Prague, and other persons, in consequence whereof his sentiments spread in that country, where lived the celebrated John Huss, who, together with Jerome of Prague, fell a martyr to the fury of the papists at Constance, about a hundred years before the time of Luther. A letter describing the sentiments of the Hussites, written from Bohemia to Erasmus, dated Oct. 10, 1519, states as follows. "They renounce all the rites and ceremonies of our church;--they ridicule our doctrine and practices in both sacraments;--they deny orders (the hierarchy) and elect officers from among the laity;--they receive no other rule than the bible;--they admit none into their communion till they be dipped in water, or baptized;--and they reckon one another without distinction of rank to be called brothers and sisters." [Colomesius_s *Collection of Letters to men of note*]

If this was the case with respect to the followers of Wickliffe in Bohemia, what should hinder us from believing that the followers of Wickliffe in England held similar sentiments respecting the discipline of the church of Christ, and that they also maintained that none ought to be admitted into their communion until they were dipped in water, or baptized?

That this was the case appears from the laws made against them in the reign of Henry IV.; for among the articles by which the inquisitors were to examine them, one was, "WHETHER AN INFANT DYING UNBAPTIZED CAN BE SAVED?" This the Lollards constantly asserted in opposition to the church of Rome, *which decreed that no infant could be saved without it*. Fox says, that one of the errors they were charged with was, "that they spoke against the opinion of such as think children are damned who depart before baptism, and that Christian people be sufficiently baptized in the blood of Christ, and need no water; and that infants be sufficiently baptized, if their parents are baptized before them." [Fox_s *Acts and Mon.* vol. i. p. 752]

Fox thinks they were slandered in this matter because says he, "It is so contrary to the manifest word that it is not thought any to be so ignorant of the gospel that ever did or would affirm the same." But that these people opposed the baptism of infants, is corroborated by the *Dutch Martyrology*, or *bloody Theatre*, which says from Walsingham, "that one Sir Lewis Clifford, who had been a friend of Wickliffe, did

discover to the Archbishop of Canterbury, that the Lollards would not baptize their newborn children." [Danver_s *Treatise of Baptism*, p. 2, 303].

Respecting Wycliffe_s sentiments on this subject, many writers have positively asserted that he opposed this practice. Dr. Hurd in his *History of all Religions* says, "It is pretty clear from the writings of many learned men, that Dr. John Wickliffe, the first English reformer, either considered infant baptism unlawful, or at best not necessary." The author of a *History of Religion*, published in London in 1764, in four volumes octavo, says, "It is clear from many authors that Wickliffe rejected infant baptism, and that on this doctrine his followers agreed with the modern Baptists." Thomas Walden and Joseph Vicecomes [Catholic authorities who persecuted Wycliffe_s followers], who had access to his writings, have charged him with denying pedobaptism, and they brought their charge at a time when it might have been easily contradicted, if it had not been true. The first of these charges him with holding the following opinions about baptism. "That baptism doth not confer, but only signifies grace which was given before; that those are fools and presumptuous who affirm such infants not to be saved as die without baptism; also that he denied that all sins are abolished in baptism, and asserted that the baptism of water profited not without the baptism of the Spirit." [Walden, tom. ii. c. 98, 108]

Walsingham says, "It was in the year 1381, that that damnable heretic, John Wickliffe, reassumed the curses opinions of Berengarius;" of which it is certain that denying infant baptism was one. He also says "that his followers did deny baptism to infants, because they concluded them, as they were the children of believers, to be holy, and not to stand in need of baptism to take away original sin." Thomas Walden, before mentioned, calls Wickliffe "one of the seven heads that came out of the bottomless pitt, *for denying infant baptism*, that heresie of the Lollards, of whom he was so great a ringleader." [Danver_s *Treatise*, p. 2, 287]

A council was held at Blackfriars, June 11, 1382, to condemn Wickliffe and his sect; at which time, while his enemies were in convocation, that terrible earthquake happened which is mentioned in the chronicles of St. Alban_s, and of which Wycliffe also takes notice in his writings. This greatly alarmed his persecutors, but did not prevent their framing many articles of accusation. The eleventh article was, *that the children of believers might be saved without baptism*.

A denial that baptism had virtue in itself to procure the salvation of the infant, and that the want of it would insure damnation, was rudely shaking the foundation on which infant baptism was then built. He is accused, however, of going still farther, and of asserting, "that none were members of the church visible who did not app[ear to be members of the church invisible; and that none had a right to church membership who did not make a public profession, and profess obedience to Christ. It is unnecessary to add, that infants, being unable to make this public profession, would not be considered by him as members of the visible church, or as possessing a right to participate of any of its ordinances.

Having mentioned some of the followers of Wickliffe, it seems desirable that we should more particularly notice a few of them, as persons who by English protestants ought to be had in everlasting remembrance.

In the history of Welsh Baptists already mentioned, there is an account of one of these named Walter Brute. Mr. Thomas says, "I suppose he lived in or near Olchon," and mentions several reasons which make this appear probable. "It is recorded (says he) that he was a gentleman of rank, learning, and parts, though reckoned a layman by the popish clergy. Trevnant or rather Trefnant, bishop of Hereford, charges Mr. Brute with seducing the people as much as he could from day to day, and with teaching openly and privately as well the nobles as the commons. Mr. William Swinderby, and Mr. Stephen Ball, were preachers of note, then, intimate friends of Brute, and all of Wickliffe's doctrine.

"By a copy of a commission of Richard II, about 1392, it appears that Mr. Swinderby and his friends had fled into Wales, out of the diocese of Hereford. It is very probable that they had retired among the mountains about Olchon and Chapel-y-ffin, and that they there instructed our countrymen as they had opportunity, where they could soon been out of the county and diocese of Hereford. So many counties and dioceses meeting on those hills, gave some help in the time of persecution. They could shift from one county and diocese to another, as they saw occasion; so finding shelter in those deep vallies, and on those lofty hills, and craggy rocks.

"Mr. Fox, in his martyrology, has given us a large account of Mr. Brute and his religious sentiments, taken from the register of the bishop of Hereford. Our countrymen did confute popish errors in many articles, and reformed much concerning baptism. He held that faith should precede baptism, and that baptism was not essential to salvation; yet still admitted that the faith of godly parents was sufficient for their infants. Mr. Thomas Davye, however, in his treatise on baptism, says, Mr. Fox indeed, speaking of the opinion of W. Brute, as to the sacrament of baptism and of infants dying without it, seems to extenuate the matter, because he himself was for infant baptism! Mr. Davye further says, that Swinderby was one of Brute's followers, and supposes that Mr. Brute was more a Baptist than was represented by Mr. Fox.

"Our worthy countrymen, Mr. C. Edwards (adds Mr. Thomas) entitles Mr. Brute *Cymro godidog*; that is, an excellent Cambro Briton, a learned layman of the diocese of Hereford; and says that he instructed his countrymen and admonished them, explaining the scriptures, and showing the difference between true religion and popish foppery exorcisms, and such things.

"Richard II directed a letter to the nobility and gentry of the county of Hereford, and to the mayor of the city. Among the gentlemen then named, Thomas Oldcastle is one. The letter charges all to persecute W. Brute, charged with preaching heresy in the diocese and places adjacent, and also with keeping conventicles. It seems from this, that Brute, Swinderby, and others, preached in different places on the borders of Wales; and Mr. Fox has recorded, out of the register, that they preached at Whitney and Leinwardine in Herefordshire.

"Mr. Brute was a reputable writer. Mr. Fox has mentioned his works on several subjects of divinity, in his *Acts and Monuments*. We are also told that Fox set forth the works of Tyndal, Frith, and Barnes, in 1573; and that it was wished the same diligence had been used in searching after and collecting the works of Wickliffe, Brute, and others. These wrote near a hundred years before printing began in England.

"There is no certain account that I can find (continues Mr. Thomas) where, how, nor when Mr. Brute died, whether he suffered martyrdom or not. But we may look upon him as the first public reformer among our countrymen. On his trial, as recorded by Fox, he declared that he was a Briton by father and mother, and rejoiced that he was a descendant from the ancient Britons, who had been so valiant for the truth and against popery, in former times. The last account Fox gives of him is in 1393. In the work of Mr. Davye, above referred to, it is said, that Mr. Swinderby, the friend of Brute, was burnt alive for his profession in Smithfield, in 1401."

Another reason assigned by Mr. Thomas, for concluding that Brute and his friends preached in and about Olchon is, that Sir John Oldcastle, who was so zealous for Wickliffe's doctrine, was a native, and resident of this part of the country. "His birth place and patrimony (says he) bear his name to this day. Oldcastle is a small parish adjoining to Cludock in Monmouthshire. The valiant king Henry V was also born at Monmouth; and having a great regard for his countrymen, introduced him into his household. Sir John Oldcastle married Lord Cobham's daughter, and at his father-in-law's death was created Lord Cobham. The noble Briton though in the king's court, was full of zeal against popery, and was reckoned the chief man through the kingdom in supporting, defending, and encouraging the Lollards, who were the Protestants and Dissenters of these times. For these things the popish clergy were full of bitterness and rage against him, as they knew very well that he was much in favour at court. However, after many consultations, they found means, like Daniel's enemies, to prevail with the king to have him apprehended and brought to trial as an enemy to Holy Church."

It is said of this excellent nobleman, that it was publicly known that he had been at great expense in collecting and transcribing the works of Wickliffe, which he dispersed among the common people without any reserve. It was publicly known also that he maintained a great number of the disciples of Wickliffe as itinerant preachers in many parts of the country, particularly in the dioceses of Canterbury, Rochester, and Hereford.

When the archbishop, at the head of a large body of the dignified clergy, waited on the king, he had before him with as much acrimony as decency would admit, the offence of his servant Lord Cobham, and begged his majesty would suffer them, for Christ's sake, to put him to death. The king told the archbishop that he had ever been averse to shedding of blood in the cause of religion: such violence he thought more destructive of truth than of error. He therefore enjoined the convocation to postpone the affair a few days; in which time he would himself reason with Lord Cobham, whose behaviour he by no means approved; and if this were ineffectual, he would then leave him to the censure of the church.

With this answer the primate was satisfied; and the king sending for Lord Cobham, endeavoured by all the arguments in his power to set before him, the high offence of separating from the church, and pathetically exhorted him to retract his error. Lord Cobham's answer is upon record "I ever was (said he) a dutiful subject to your majesty, and I hope ever shall be. Next to God, I profess obedience to my king. But as for the spiritual dominion of the pope, I never could see on what foundation it is claimed, nor can I pay him any obedience. As sure as God's word is true, to me it appears fully evident that he is the great antichrist foretold in holy writ."

This answer of Lord Cobham so exceedingly shocked the king, that, turning away in visible displeasure, he from that time withdrew from him every mark of his favour. Deserted by the king, the archbishop soon found means to get him committed to the tower; and on Sep. 23, 1413, he was cited to appear before the consistory; but not appearing, he was declared contumacious, and excommunicated without further ceremony. But though committed to the tower, and condemned to die, yet by some means he made his escape; and taking advantage of a dark night he eluded pursuit, and arrived safe in Wales, where he found an asylum, and was secured by some of the chiefs of that country from the rage of his enemies.

It is supposed that all this was under the connivance, and with the approbation of the King, who was not willing to put him to death. "We are told (says Mr. Thomas) by a Monmouthshire author, that Sir John lay concealed among his tenants and friends at or about Oldcastle, above four years; till at last, Lord Powys, a covetous and bigotted papist, for a considerable sum of money, apprehended him."

He was then taken to London; and the King being at that time out of the Kingdom, the Romish clergy made all speed to dispatch him by a most inhuman death. He was hanged up by an iron chain round the waist, and burnt, or rather roasted, to death, over a slow fire.

The translator of Rapin says in a note, "As this was the first noble blood that was shed in England by popish cruelty, so perhaps none ever suffered a more cruel martyrdom." The historian says, "Thus died Sir John Oldcastle, baron of Cobham, with wonderful constancy, perfectly answerable to the firmness wherewith he had all along maintained the doctrine of Wickliffe which he professed." There is a painting of this wonderful man preserved in Dr. William's library, in Red Cross street, London.

"This nobleman (says Mr. Thomas) was another instructor of the good people in and about Olchon. In the four years which he spent amongst them, it may be concluded that he did all the service he could to promote the truth for which he suffered." His martyrdom was in 1417, two years after that of the celebrated John Huss, who likewise was a worthy disciple of Wickliffe, and a hundred years before Luther began the reformation in Germany.

From some things contained in the confession of faith which Lord Cobham presented to the King, it is evident that he had fully imbibed the sentiment of Wickliffe, that all

traditions not taught in the scripture are superfluous and wicked." This confession he thus concluded: "Finally, my faith is, that God will ask no more of a christian in his life than to obey the precepts of his blessed law. If any prelate of the church requires more of any other kind of obedience, he contemneth Christ, exalteth himself above God, and is plainly antichrist._

Thus did Lord Cobham and his friends appear on the side of Christ, when "all the world wondered after the beast;" and when England was immersed in error, they heroically defended the truth. These were Dissenters long before the church of England, in its present form, was by law established. These shone as morning stars in our hemisphere, before the day of the Reformation. These were they who followed the Redeemer whithersoever he went; who overcame all their enemies through the blood of the lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and who loved not their lives unto the death!

It is to be lamented that we have not a particular account of the afflictions which the Lollards in general suffered at this time; yet it is not to be doubted that the hand of persecution fell with superior weight on the lower order of people, when even nobility was not a preservative from the rage of the clergy. There is a remark in Robinson_s dissertation on public preaching, prefixed to Claude_s Essay, which refers to a period forty years after this, and proves that the demon of persecution was at that time neither dead nor chained. "I have (says he) before me a manuscript register of Gray, bishop of Ely, which proves that in the year 1457, there was a congregation of this sort in this village, Chesterton, where I live, who privately assembled for divine worship, and had preachers of their own who taught them the very doctrines we now preach. Six of them were accused of heresy before the tyrant of the district, and condemned to adjure heresy, and to do penance half naked, in the public market-places of Ely, and Cambridge, and in the churchyard of Great Swaffham. It was pity the poor souls were forced to abjure the twelfth article of their accusation, in which they were said to have affirmed, All priests and people in orders are incarnate devils."

During the reign of Henry VIII, some alterations were made in the constitution of the church. In the year 1536, the articles were published, commonly called King Henry_s Creed, and entitled, "Articles devised by the Kynges Highnes Majestie to stablyshe christen quietnes and unitie among us, and to avoyde contentious opinions, which articles he also approved by the consent and determination of the whole clergie of the realme." "In the translation whereof (says Fox) he altereth nothing from the old trade, heretofore received from Rome."

What is said about baptism is truly papistical, and evidently points at some who opposed infant baptism. "Item, That infants must needs be christened because they be born in original sin, which sin must needs be remitted, which cannot be done but by the sacrament of baptism, whereby they receive the Holy Ghost, which exerciseth his grace and efficacy in them, and cleanseth and purifieth them from sin by his most secret virtue and operation. Item, that children of men once baptized, can nor ought to be baptized again. Item, That they ought to repute and take all the Anabaptists and the Pelagians_

opinions contrary to the premises, and every other man_s opinions on this behalf, for detestable heresies, and to be utterly condemned."

The second article runs after this manner. "That baptism was a sacrament instituted by Christ; that it was necessary to salvation; and that infants were to be baptized for the pardon of original sin."

In the next year we find a proclamation issued against heresies and heretics, which recites, "That of late many strangers born out of this land are arrived and come into this realm, which albeit they were baptized in their infancy or childhood, according to the universal church of Christ; yet notwithstanding, in contempt of the holy sacrament of baptism so given and received, they have of their own presumption lately rebaptized themselves." [Ibid.]

From these articles and proclamations it is easy to discern, that there were many persons in the kingdom who, objecting to infant baptism, were baptized on a profession of faith. The methods taken to prevent their increase were ineffectual; "for in October 1538, there was a commission, (says Burnet,) sent to Cranmer, Stokesly, Sampson, and some others, to inquire after Anabaptists; to proceed against them; to restore the penitent; to burn their books; and to deliver the obstinate to the secular arm. But I have not, (says the bishop,) seen what proceedings there were upon this." [Burnet_s Hist. Ref. vol. 3. p. 159]

From a passage in Brandt_s *History of the Reformation* it appears that the Baptists in England were obliged to leave the country. He says, "In the year 1539 there were put to death at Delpt [Holland], one and thirty Anabaptists, that fled from England, the men beheaded and the women drowned." In the next year Mr. Barnes was burnt in Smithfield, and in his speech to the people at the stake he declared he was not an Anabaptist as he had been charged with, by saying, "Which sect I detest and abhor; and in this place there hath been burned some of them, whom I never favoured nor maintained." [Fox_s Martyr, vol. 1. p. 610]

On Nov. 16, the King put forth a proclamation, in which he condemned all the books of the Anabaptists and Sacramentarians, and appointed those to be punished that vended them. And in December, he sent a letter to the justices in England, in which, after many other things, they are commanded to take care that all the injunctions, laws, and proclamations, against the Sacramentarians and Anabaptists, be duly executed.

In this year also there was an act of grace passed, from the benefit of which, besides other particular exceptions, all Anabaptists and Sacramentarians, and all those that affirmed there was a fate upon men by which the day of their death was unalterably determined, were excluded. By this it appears, that the king asserted that supremacy which his creatures had assigned to him; and that he not only condemned those who thought his opponent Luther to be right, and the King wrong, on the subject of the Lord_s supper, but also set his throne above the throne of God, "in whose hand our breath is," and who has "determined our days;" and who has declared "that he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved."

That the Lollards had been cruelly treated in his reign previously to this period, is evident from the history of those times. In the year 1511 Joseph Brown was burned. In 1512, William and James Seely, and Joseph Brewster, shared the same fate. In 1514, Joseph Hunn was murdered in the Lollard's tower, and in 1519, Joseph Tawksby and many others ended their lives at the stake. In 1525 seven Baptists who came over from Holland, were apprehended and imprisoned. Some of whom were afterwards burned at Smithfield. In 1535, twenty-two Baptists were apprehended and put to death. In 1539, sixteen men and fifteen women were banished to Delpt in Holland, for opposing infant baptism. At this place they were taken by the papists and put to death. In the same year two Anabaptists were burned beyond Southwark, in the way to Newington, and a little before them, five Ditch Anabaptists were burned at Smithfield.

From a speech delivered by the king at the parliament, Dec. 24, 1545, as recited by Lord Herbert, it should seem that the epithet *Anabaptist* was a term of reproach, applicable to all those who were struggling to promote a reformation in the church and state, just as the epithet Puritan afterwards, and that of Methodist at present, have been indiscriminately applied to all who are zealous for promoting evangelical principles. "What love and charity (says Henry) is there among you, when one calls another heretic and Anabaptist; and he calls him again Papist, Hypocrite, and Pharisee? He adds, Be these tokens of charity among you? I see and hear daily that you of the clergy preach one against another; teach one contrary to another; inveigh one against another, without charity or discretion. Some be too stiff in their old *mumpsimus*; other be too busy in their new *sumpsimus*." [Crosby, vol. i. p. 42]

The papists, however, being the stronger party, prevailed on the king to prosecute with unrelenting cruelty all who opposed their system. The next year, Claxton was imprisoned for denying the real presence in the sacrament, and would have been burnt, but for his recantation. But a pious and excellent lady, Anne Askew, who was frequently at court, and a great favourite of queen Catharine Parr, after suffering the most excruciating tortures on the rack, was burned at the stake about June 1546.

Bishop Latimer, in a sermon preached before king Edward VI, alluding to the events of the reign of Henry VIII, says, "The Anabaptists that were burnt here in divers parts of England, as I heard of credible men, (I saw them not myself,) went to their death even intrepid as ye will say, without any fear in the world, cheerfully. Also I should have told you here of a certain sect of heretics that speak against this order and doctrine, [the king's supremacy:] they will have no magistrates, no judges on earth. Then I have to tell you what I heard of late, by the relation of a credible person and worshipful man, of a town of this realm of England that hath above five hundred heretics of this erroneous opinion in it, as he said." [Ibid. p. 62]

I cannot but think that these Anabaptists were Wickliffites; and when it is considered how zealous this good bishop was in supporting the supremacy of the king as the head of the church, is there not reason to suspect, that they were accused of objecting to magistrates and judges, merely because they asserted what all dissenters now assert? That the civil magistrate ought not to interfere in matters of conscience; and that while it is our duty to

"render to Caesar the things that are Caesar_s," it is equally our duty to give "unto God the things that are God_s?"

This popish protestant king died, Jan. 28, 1547, leaving in a very unfinished state, the reformation, which had been begun without his intending it. But the fetters of popery were broken; the scriptures in the mother tongue were sanctioned by parliament; and in 1540, it was enjoined by royal proclamation, that every parish should place one of the copies of the bible, which was called Cranmer_s bible, in their churches, under the penalty of forty shillings a month; and though this was suppressed by the king about two years afterwards, though the influence of the popish bishops, yet as the people used to crowd to the churches after their hours of labour to hear it read, there is no doubt but the information which by these means was diffused throughout the land, laid the foundation for that glorious superstructure of Christian liberty, which by the patient sufferings of the zealous Puritans in the succeeding reigns was brought nearly to perfection. The blessings resulting to all classes of people, and particularly to protestant dissenters, from their struggles with ecclesiastical and civil despotism, we now enjoy; and we sincerely pray that they may be transmitted to our descendants unimpaired and improved.

VOLUME I.

CHAPTER 3

A.D. 1540 - 1602

King Edward VI [king of England and Ireland from 1547-53] came to the throne at the age of nine years and six months; "a prince (says Neal) for learning and piety, for acquaintance with the world, and application to business, the very wonder of his age."

The majority of the bishops and inferior clergy were on the side of popery; but the government was in the hands of the chief reformers, who began immediately to relax the horrors of the late reign. Persecution ceased, the prison doors were set open, and several who had been forced to quit the kingdom for religion returned home.

The reforming divines, being delivered from that awe with which the imperiousness of the late king had inspired them, began to preach openly against the abuses of popery; and the people in the many places, inflamed by their addresses, pulled down the images in the churches without authority.

The famous Genevan reformer, Calvin, appears to have felt deeply interested in the reformation that was going forward in England, and set his heart (says Heylin) upon promoting one wherein "the scripture might be made the rule of faith and worship," and offered his assistance to archbishop Cranmer for that purpose. [*History of Presbytery*, p. 13] He also wrote to the Protector, Lord Seymour, Oct. 29, 1548, encouraging him to go on, notwithstanding the wars, as Hezekiah did, with his reformation. In this he laments the violence of some who professed the gospel, and complains that he heard there were but few gospel sermons preached in England, and that the preachers recited their

discourse coldly. Many of the reformers wished to expunge everything from the church which was of popish origin. But Cranmer and Ridley, wishing to prevent discontents, consulted with flesh and blood, and resolved to retain the vests and ceremonies. From this period the papists concluded, and that with strong confidence, that the English church would return back again to Rome. Bishop Bonner said publicly, "Having tasted of our broth, they will ere long eat of our beef." [*Advance of the church of England towards Rome*, p. 18]

In the year 1549, bishop Burnet says, "there were many Anabaptists in several parts of England. They were generally Germans, whom the revolutions had forced to change their seats. They held that infant baptism was no baptism, and so were rebaptized." [*Hist. Ref. Abrig.* p. 85] On Apr. 12, a complaint was brought to the council, that with the strangers who were come into England, some of that persuasion were come over, who were disseminating their principles, and making proselytes. "These people, (says Neal,) besides the principle of adult baptism, held several wild opinions about the trinity, and virgin Mary, and the person of Christ." We cannot, however, rely with implicit confidence on all that is said concerning any sect of Christians by their adversaries, since it is well known that many sects have been charged with holding sentiments which they never held, and that caricature representations have been given of their real sentiments.

The account Burnet gives of these persons is as follows. "Upon Luther's first preaching in Germany, there arose many, who building on some of his principles, carried things much farther than he did. The chief foundation laid down by him was that the scripture was the only rule of Christians." [*Hist. Ref.* vol. ii. p. 110] If this was the principle they held, it is probable that it was not so much their theological sentiments, as their firmness in resisting all imposition in matters of religion, which exposed them to such violent resentments.

In the articles which were framed in 1547, by a committee of divines appointed to examine and reform the offices of the church, it was enacted, that "in the administration of baptism a cross was to be made on the child's forehead and breast, and the devil exorcised to go out and enter no more into him. Also that the child was to be dipped three times in the font, on the right and left sides, and on the breast, if not weak. A white garment was to be put on it in token of innocence, and it was to be anointed on the head, with a short prayer for the unction of the Holy Ghost." [Neal, vol. i. p. 64]

Is it to be wondered at, if these absurd notions, so popish and antisciptural, should have a tendency to encrease the number of Baptists, who had both reason and scripture to plead for their sentiments? But such daring innovators, who presumed to rend the seamless coat of Christ, and refused to worship the idol of uniformity which the reformers had set up, were not to be tolerated in a Christian commonwealth.

We find therefore, that in the year 1549, a commission was given to the archbishop of Canterbury, the bishops of Ely, Worcester, Chichester, Lincoln, and Rochester, Sir William Petre, Sir Thomas Smith, Dr. May, and some others, any three being a quorum, to examine and search after all Anabaptists, heretics, and contemners of the common

prayer. They were to endeavour to reclaim them, and after penance to give them absolution; but if they continued obstinate, they were to excommunicate, imprison, and deliver them over to the secular arm. This was little better than a protestant inquisition. People had generally thought that all the statutes for burning heretics had been repealed; but it was now said, that heretics were to be burned by the common law of England, and that the statutes were only for directing the manner of conviction, so that the repealing them did not take away that which was grounded on a writ of common law." [Neal, vol. i. p. 60] Before the commissioners were brought several tradesmen, one of whom, a butcher of the name of Thombe, abjured his principles, of which one was, *that the baptism of infants was not profitable, because it went before faith*. He was commanded, notwithstanding his abjuration, to carry a faggot at St. Paul's, when there should be a sermon setting forth his heresy. [Strypes *Life of Cranmer*, p. 181]

The most awful instance of persecution in this year was the burning of JOAN BOUCHER of Kent. Burnet says, "She denied that Christ was truly incarnate of the virgin, whose flesh being sinful, he could take none of it; but the Word, by consent of the inward man in the virgin, took flesh of her. These were her words. The commissioners took much pains about her, and had many conferences with her; but she was so extravagantly conceited of her own notions that she rejected with scorn all they said: whereupon she was adjudged an obstinate heretic, and so left to the secular power."

To the other charges preferred against this good woman by her enemies, who would endeavour to blacken her as much as possible in order to justify their own conduct, it is to be added that she was a Baptist; and perhaps this was the sin which was not to be forgiven. "When the compassionate young king could not be prevailed upon to sign the warrant for her execution, Cranmer, with his superior learning, was employed to persuade him. He argued from the practice of the Jewish church in stoning blasphemers, which rather silenced his highness than satisfied him: for when at last he yielded to the importunity of the archbishop, he told him with tears in his eyes, that if he did wrong, since it was in submission to his authority, he should answer it before God. This struck the archbishop with surprise; but yet he at last suffered the sentence to be executed." [Burnet's *Hist. of Ref.* vol. ii. p. 112]

The extraordinary efforts used to bring Joan Boucher to retract her sentiments, prove her to have been a person of note, whose opinions carried more weight and respect than it can be supposed the chimeras of a frantic woman, as she has been sometimes represented, would have done. The account which Mr. Strype gives of her is truly honourable. "She was (he says) a great disperser of Tyndal's new testament, translated by him into English, and printed at Colen, and was a great reader of scripture herself. Which book also she dispersed in the court, and so became known to certain women of quality, and was particularly acquainted with Mrs. Anne Askew. She used for the greater secrecy to tie the books with strings under her apparel, and so pass with them into the court." [Strype's *Eccles. Mem.* vol. ii. p. 214] By this it appears that she hazarded her life in dangerous times to bring others to the knowledge of the word of God. To be employed in such a work, and to die in such a cause, is the highest character that could be given to any of the disciples of Christ.

There are some remarks upon this circumstance in Fox's Latin book of Martyrs, which are omitted in the English from a regard, as is supposed, to the reputation of the Martrys who suffered in the next reign. But Mr. Pierce has given us the following translation in his answer to Nichols, p. 33. "In king Edward's reign, some were put to death for heresy. One of these was Joan Boucher, or Joan of Kent. Now, says Mr. Fox, when the protestant bishops had resolved to put her to death, a friend of Mr. John Rogers, the divinity-reader in St. Paul's church, came to him, earnestly desiring him to use his interest with the Archbishop, that the poor woman's life might be spared, and other means used to prevent the spreading of her opinion, which might be done in time: saying too, that though while she lived, she infected few with her opinion, yet she might bring many to think well of it, by suffering death for it. He pleaded therefore that it was better she should be kept in some prison, without an opportunity of propagating her notion among weak people, and so she would do no harm to others, and might live to repent herself. Rogers on the other hand pleaded, she ought to be put to death. Well then saith his friend, if you are resolved to put an end to her life together with her opinion, chuse some other kind of death, more agreeable to the gentleness and mercy prescribed in the gospel; there being no need, that such tormenting deaths should be taken up, in imitation of the Papists. Rogers answered, that burning alive was no cruel death but easy enough. His friend then hearing these words, which expressed so little regard to poor creatures suffering, answered him with great vehemence, and striking Roger's hand, which before he held fast, said to him, Well, perhaps, it may so happen, that you yourselves shall have your hands full of this mild burning. And so it came to pass; Mr. Rogers was the first man who was burned in Queen Mary's reign. I am apt to think (adds Mr. Pierce) that Mr. Roger's friend was no other than Fox himself." [Crosby, vol. i. p. 61]

The name of TYNDALE having been mentioned, it may not be improper to give a short account of his labours and sufferings in the cause of God. He went young to Oxford, and had part of his education there, and part at Cambridge. After leaving the university, he settled for a time in Gloucestershire; but was obliged to leave his native country on account of persecution. On the continent he translated the new testament into English, and printed it in 1526. This edition was bought up by Sir Thomas More and bishop Tostall. With the money procured from this source, it was republished in 1530: but as this also contained some reflections on the English bishops and clergy, they commanded that it should be purchased and burnt. In 1532, Tyndale and his associates translated and printed the whole bible; but while he was preparing a second edition, he was apprehended and burnt for heresy in Flanders.

[Note: For a fuller and more precise report on William Tyndale and his translation efforts and the timing of the various editions of his Bibles, see *Annals of the English Bible* by Christopher Anderson. This can be located in the Fundamental Baptist CD-ROM Library, available from Way of Life Literature, P.O. Box 610368, Port Huron, MI 48041. Anderson, who meticulously researched his subject, published his book 34 years after Ivimey published his history of English Baptists. D.W. Cloud]

He was a great reformer. It is generally supposed he was born on the borders of Wales. Mr. Thomas thinks this to be very probable, as "Mr. Llewelyn Tyndal and his son

Hezekiah were reputable members of the Baptist church at Llanwenarth near Abergavenny, about the year 1700, as appeared by the old church book, and there were some of the same family in those parts still remaining." It is probable, therefore, that Tyndale might derive his superior light from some of the Wickliffites about Hereford and the adjoining counties, where we have already proved that much scriptural truth was for ages deposited. To this great man we are under great obligations for our emancipation from the fetters of popery, as it is not likely these would ever have been broken off, but by the hammer of God_s Word.

The sentiments of this celebrated man on the subject of baptism may be collected from the following extract from his works. After reprobating severely the conduct of the Romish clergy for using a latin form of words, he says, "the washing without the word helpeth not; but threw the word it purifieth and cleanseth us, as thou readest Eph. 6. How Christ cleanseth the congregation in the fountain of water threw the word: the word is the promise which God hath made. Now as a preacher, in preaching the word of God saveth the hearers that believe so doeth the washing in that it preacheth and representeth to us the promise that God hath made unto us in Christ, the washing preacheth unto us that we are cleansed with Christ_s blood shedding which was an offering and a satisfaction for the sin of all that repent and believe consenting and submitting themselves unto the will of God. The plunging into the water signifieth that we die and are buried with Christ as concerning the old life of sin which is Ada. And the pulling out again signifieth that we rise again with Christ in anew life full of the Holy Ghost which shall teach us, and guide us, and work the will of God in us; as thou seest Rom. 6." [The obedience of all degrees proved by God_s worde imprinted by Wyllyam Copland at London 1561] [Note from the Publisher of this electronic edition of Ivimey: We have modernized the spelling of Tyndale_s words to facilitate ease of understanding for current readers.]

Whether Tyndale baptized persons on a profession of faith or not, it is certain that his sentiments would naturally lead him to the practice; as what is said of the subject of this ordinance in this quotation, can in no sense apply to infants; who cannot be said to "repent and believe, consenting and submitting themselves unto the will of God." As it relates to the manner in which baptism was at that time administered, his statement is so plain that it requires no comment.

To return to events which took place in England during the reign of Edward VI, we learn from Burnet, that about the end of December 1550, after many cavils in the parliament, an act passed for the king_s general pardon, from the benefits of which the Anabaptists were excluded. "Last of all (says he came the king_s general pardon; out of which those in the tower and other prisons on account of the state, as also all Anabaptists, were excepted." This is a plain intimation that the Baptists were so numerous as to claim the attention of government, and so obnoxious as to be placed on a level with those who were imprisoned as enemies to the state.

In the same year a visitation of the diocese of London was made by Ridley, the new bishop. Among other questions put to the inferior clergy was the following: "Whether any Anabaptists, or others, used private conventicles, with different opinions and forms

from those established." There were also questions about baptism and marriage. Burnet says, "these articles are in bishop Sparrow_s collection." [Hist. of Refor. vol. ii. p. 143-158]

An event which took place in the next year shows that the Baptists were still offensive to those in power. On April 6, 1551, GEORGE VAN-PARE, a Dutchman, was condemned, and on the twenty-fifth of the same month was burnt at Smithfield. Speaking of this person, Neal remarks, "He was a man of strict and virtuous life, and very devout: he suffered with great constancy of mind, kissing the stake and faggots that were to burn him." Burnet says, that "the eminent character which he had for piety and devotion, and the fortitude and constancy that he manifested at the stake, tended more to expose Cranmer than any event which had happened. It was now said by the papists, that men of harmless lives might be put to death for heresy by the confession of the reformers themselves. In all the books published in queen Mary_s days, these instances were always produced; and when Cranmer himself was brought to the stake, the people called it a just retaliation." [Neal, vol. i. p. 61]

Mr. Strype says that on Sept. 27, 1552, a letter was sent to the Archbishop, to examine a sect newly sprung up in Kent. He says it appears not what this sect was; he supposes they may be the family of love, or David George_s sect; but these conjectures of his have no good foundation. "I am persuaded, says Mr. Pierce, this sect was no other than some good honest dissenters, who having been grieved to see so much of popery retained attempted a further reformation themselves, which would be a very displeasing thing to our bishops who expect all men to wait their leisure." [Answer to Nichol. p. 56] Mr. Strype in his life of Cranmer p. 208, says expressly that these persons were Anabaptists. In all probability many of these came to Joan Boucher_s end, as no argument could convince the divines of this age of the absurdity and wickedness of putting men to death for conscience sake.

Burnet seems to think that the sufferings of these persons was on account of their erroneous opinions respecting the person of Christ; and says that "the other sort of Anabaptists, who only denied infant baptism, had no severities used against them; but that several books were written against them, to justify infant baptism; and the practice of the church so early begun, and so universally spread, was thought a good plea, especially being grounded on such arguments in scripture, as did demonstrate, at least the lawfulness of it." [Burnet Abridg. part ii. p. 87] However this might be, we are hereby furnished with an important piece of information, proving, that there were persons among them who were able to defend their principles, and who were not afraid to do so, though they thereby exposed themselves to imprisonment and death.

The next year it was resolved in council to reform the doctrine of the church. Archbishop Cranmer and Bishop Ridley were appointed to this work, who framed forty-two articles upon the chief points of the Christian faith. These were entitled, "Articles agreed upon by the bishops and other learned men, in the convocation held in London, in the year 1552, for the avoiding diversity of opinions, and establishing consent touching true religion: Published by the king_s authority." Neal does not notice the alteration in the twenty eighth article, which now stood as follows. "The custom of the church for baptizing

young children, is both to be commended, and by all means to be retained in the church." [Crosby, vol. i. p. 54] It is worthy of observation, that infant baptism was not retained because it was commanded by Christ, or practised by the apostles and first Christians, but as the custom of the church.

The excellent young king was a friend to toleration. John a Lasco, who was the pastor of a foreign church, published a work which was dedicated to Sigismund, king of Poland, 1555; in which it is said, that "King Edward desired that the rites and ceremonies used under popery, should be purged out by degrees; and that strangers should have churches *to observe all things according to apostolical observation only*; that by these means the English churches might be excited to embrace apostolical purity with the unanimous consent of the states of the kingdom." He adds, that "the king was at the head of this project, and that Cranmer promoted it; but that some great persons stood in the way." Martin Bucer, a German divine, and professor of divinity in Cambridge, a person in high estimation with the young king, drew up a plan and presented it to his majesty, in which he wrote largely on ecclesiastical discipline. The king having read it, set himself to write a general discourse about reformation, but did not live to finish it. His death, which happened in 1553, in the sixteenth year of his age, and the seventh of his reign, put an end to all his noble designs for perfecting the reformation. Dr. Leighton says, when speaking of his premature death, "This king, a gracious plant whereof the soil was not worthy, like another Josiah, setting himself with all his might to promote the reformation, abhorred and forbid that any mass should be permitted to his sister. Further, he was desirous not to leave a hoof of the Romish beast in his Kingdom, as he was taught by some of the sincerer sort. But as he wanted instruments to effect this good, so he was mightily opposed in all his good designs by the prelatists, which caused him in his godly jealousy, in the very anguish of his soul, to pour out his soul in tears." [An appeal to the parliament, &c.] Neal says, "He was an incomparable prince, of most promising expectations; and in the judgment of most impartial persons, the very phoenix of his age. It was more than whispered that he was poisoned." [Neal, vol. i. p. 81]

During the reign of the sanguinary MARY, who succeeded him, it is not to be doubted that the Baptists came in for their full share of suffering, and that many of the martyrs were of that denomination, which was then numerous, although their sentiments have not been handed down to us upon that subject.

In the first year of her reign, 1553, we have an account of the examination of Mr. Woodman before the bishop of Winchester, in the church of St. Mary Overy_s, in which the bishop said, "Hold him a book: if he refuse to swear, he is an Anabaptist, and shall be excommunicated." Also in the examination of Mr. Philpot before the lords of the council, Nov. 5, 1555, Rich said to him, "All heretics boast of the Spirit of God, and every one would have a church by himself, as Joan of Kent and the Anabaptists."

Spanhemius, in his account of David George of Delpt in Holland, who was driven from his own country by persecution, and died in London, and was honourably interred in St. Lawrence_s church, informs us, that three years afterwards, it was discovered that he was an Anabaptist; upon which his followers were sought after; a certain number of divines

and lawyers were appointed to examine them; his opinions were condemned by an ordinance; his picture was carried about and burnt; and his corps taken up and burnt likewise. [Crosby vol. i. p. 63,64] It is probable that David George was a member of a church of foreign Baptists that was formed in London in the former reign.

Brandt assures us that "in the year 1553, the low country exiles, who in the time of Edward VI had gathered a congregation at London (which upon his death was scattered by Queen Mary) after a dreadful northern journey in which they suffered much from the Lutherans, found at Wismar two distinct communities of Anabaptists." [*Hist. Refor.* vol. i. book. iv]

These persecutions appear to have inspired the Baptists with additional fortitude in avowing their attachment to their despised tenets; for in 1557, we find that many were imprisoned, being charged with holding the following opinions.--(1.) That infant baptism is anti-scriptural--(2.) That it is commanded by the pope--(3.) That Christ commanded teaching to go before baptism. These are sentiments which the Baptists still profess, and which they conceive have never been disproved. There was also a complaint exhibited against such as favoured the gospel at Ipswich, to the Queen_s Council held at Beccles in Suffolk May 18, 1556, and among the crimes enumerated we find that four women were accused of refusing to have their children dipped in the Fonts at St. Peter_s church. One of these is said to be a midwife, and it is particularly requested that "none might be suffered to be midwives but such as are catholic, because of evil council as such times require a number of women assembled." [Fox, vol. iii. p. 791]

This cruel and bigotted princess died Nov. 17, 1558. Her death put a close to a succession of cruelties which none have fully described, many hundreds having suffered death for religion; and there being but one instance in which a reprieve was granted to a person condemned for heresy. "Her reign (says Neal) was in every respect calamitous to the nation, and ought to be transmitted down to posterity in letters of blood."

QUEEN ELIZABETH [who ruled from 1558-1603] succeeded her sister. In her reign there was much persecution. She was, however, preferable to Mary, though she seems to have been more than half a papist, and exercised a despotic sway over the lives of her subjects. The same severities which Mary exercised towards dissenters from the establishment when it was popish, were used towards them by Elizabeth when it became protestant. Protestants were persecuted by both;--by Mary, for refusing to subscribe to the absurd notions of transubstantiation and purgatory; by Elizabeth, for remonstrating against archbishops, and lord bishops; against the maintenance of the priesthood by tithes; against the kingdom of Christ being a kingdom of this world; against an unpreaching ministry; against the square cap and surplice; and against rites and ceremonies and ecclesiastical canons of human invention and imposition. Some of the dissenters objected to all these; others to only a part.

The zeal of the bishops during this period was principally directed towards the support of ceremonies. To refuse a compliance with the injunctions of the queen respecting these popish inventions, was considered reason sufficient to deprive the most eminent divines

of their station in the church, of their liberty, and of their life; at a time too when there were but few ministers of the gospel in England, and the people were perishing for lack of knowledge.

The spirit of the times may be judged of by the following circumstance. The plague being in London and several parts of the country in the summer of 1562, a little stop was thereby put to the zeal for uniformity, yet none were preferred in the church who scrupled the habits. In proof of this we may produce the examples of two of the worthiest and most learned divines of the age. The first of these was the venerable Miles Coverdale, formerly bishop of Exeter. This excellent man had been long employed in assisting Tyndale in the translation of the bible. He was born in Yorkshire, was educated at Cambridge, and proceeded doctor in the university of Tubingen. Returning to England in the time of king Edward, he was made bishop of Exeter, 1551. Upon the accession of Queen Mary, he was imprisoned, and would have been burnt; but by the intercession of the king of Denmark, he was sent over into that country. When Elizabeth came to the throne, he returned to England, and assisted at the consecration of her first archbishop of Canterbury: yet because he would not comply with the ceremonies and habits, he was neglected, and had no preferment. "This reverend man (says Mr. Strype) being now old and poor, Grindal, bishop of London, gave him the small living of St. Magnus at the Bridge-foot, where he preached quietly about two years. But not coming up to the uniformity required, he was persecuted thence, and obliged to relinquish his parish a little before his death, which took place May 20, 1567, at the age of eighty-one years. He was a celebrated preacher, admired and followed by all the puritans." [*Life of Parker*, p. 149]

The other was that venerable man, Mr. John Fox the martyrologist, a grave, learned, and laborious divine, and an exile for religion. While banished from his native country, he employed his time in writing the "Acts and Monuments" of that church which would hardly receive him into her bosom, and in collecting materials relative to the martyrdom of those who suffered for religion in the reigns of Henry VIII and Mary. This he published first in Latin for the benefit of foreigners, and then in English for the use of his own countrymen, in 1561. This book gave a most severe blow to popery. It was dedicated to the queen, and was in such high reputation that it was ordered to be placed in the churches, where it raised in the people an invincible horror and detestation of that religion which had shed so much innocent blood.

The queen professed a particular regard for Mr. Fox, and used to call him father: but as he refused to subscribe to her articles and ceremonies, he had no promotion for a considerable time. At length, through the influence of a friend, he procured a prebend in the cathedral of Sarum. This good old man would not submit to such impositions. When he was called upon to subscribe, he took his Greek testament from his pocket, and said, "To this will I subscribe." When they offered him the canons, he refused, saying, "I have nothing in the church but a prebend at Salisbury; and, if you take it away from me, much good may it do you." In a letter to his friend Dr. Humphreys, he thus pleasantly reproached the ingratitude of the times in which he lived. "I still wear the same clothes, and remain in the same sordid condition, that England received me in when I first came home out of Germany; nor do I change my degree or order, which is that of the

mendicants, or if you please of the friars preachers." [Wilson's *Hist. of Dissenting Churches*, vol. i. p. 10]

That no favour would be shown to the Baptists in such times as these, is what might naturally be expected. The share they had in the cruelties inflicted on dissenters will appear in a few instances which the historians of those times have preserved. Mr. Fuller says, "Now began the Anabaptists wonderfully to encrease in the land; and as we are sorry that any countrymen should be seduced by that opinion, so we are glad that the English as yet were free from that infection: for on Easter day was disclosed a congregation of Dutch Anabaptists, without Aldgate in London; whereof seven-and-twenty were taken and imprisoned; and four, bearing faggots at Paul's cross, solemnly recanted their dangerous opinions. Next month, one Dutchman and ten women were condemned; of whom one woman was persuaded to renounce her error; eight were banished the land; and two more were so obstinate that command was issued out for their burning in Smithfield." [*Church Hist. Cent. 16*, p. 164]

What this writer says of the English being previously free from this infection, shows how little he was acquainted with the history of the church, as the numerous instances we have mentioned abundantly prove. The account, however, which is here given, is an evidence of the steadfastness of these people in holding their opinions, as but five were influenced by threats and promises to recant; and one of these, a woman, not till after she had been condemned to be executed. This sentence two of the men cheerfully suffered, rather than deny Him who has said, "Whosoever loveth his own life more than me is not worthy of me; and whosoever loseth his life for my sake, the same shall find it."

The form of abjuration made by these Walloon Baptists is a curious document, as it proves to what lengths the prelatists wished persons professing these sentiments to go. It was taken before Dr. De Laune, in 1575, in the eighteenth year of Elizabeth, in the Dutch church, Austin friars, London, of which the doctor was minister. It is as follows: "Whereas we being seduced by the devil, the spirit of error, and by false teachers, have fallen into the most damnable errors; that Christ took not flesh of the substance of the virgin Mary, that the infants of the faithful ought not to be baptized, that a christian may not be a magistrate, or bear the sword and office of authority, and that it is not lawful for a christian man to take an oath. Now by the grace of God, and the assistance of good and learned ministers of Christ's church, we understand the same to be most damnable and detestable heresies; and do ask God, before his church, mercy for the said former errors; and do forsake, recant, and renounce them; and we abjure them from the bottom of our hearts, protesting we certainly believe the contrary. And further, we confess that the whole doctrine established and published in the church of England, and also that which is received by the Dutch church in London, is found true according to God's word. Whereunto in all things we submit ourselves, and will be most gladly members of the said Dutch church; from henceforth utterly abandoning and forsaking all and every Anabaptistical error." [Crosby, vol. i. p. 69]

From this account we learn what were the errors they were charged with, and nothing but a formal recantation of which would preserve them from either banishment or death. To

prevent those from being executed who were condemned, Fuller says, that a grave divine sent a melting letter to the queen, begging they might not be burnt. "This was written, (he adds) in elegant latin by Mr. John Fox, from whose hand I transcribed it. He was very loth that Smithfield, formerly consecrated with martyr_s ashes, should now be profaned with heretics, and desirous that the papists might enjoy their own monopoly of cruelty in burning condemned persons."

The following is the translation of this letter, which does credit to the heart of the writer.-
-"Most serene and happy princess, most illustrious queen, the honour of our country, and honour of our age. As nothing hath ever been farther from my thoughts and expectation than ever to trouble your most excellent majesty by my troublesome interruption; so it grieves me very much that I must break that silence which has hitherto been the result of my mind. But so it now happens, by I know not what infelicity, that the present time obliges me, contrary to my hope and opinion, to that which of all things in the world I least desired; and though hitherto I have been troublesome to nobody, I am now, contrary to my inclination, constrained to be importunate, even with my princess; not in any matter or cause of my own, but through the calamity brought upon others; and by how much the more sharp and lamentable that is, by so much the more I am spurred on to deprecate it.

"I understand there are some here in England, not English but come hither from Holland, I suppose both men and women, who having been tried according to law, and having publicly declared their repentance, are happily reclaimed. Many others are condemned to exile; a right sentence in my opinion. But I hear there are one or two of these who are appointed to the most severe of punishments, viz. *burning*, except your clemency prevent. Now in this one affair I conceive there are two things to be considered; the one is the wickedness of their errors, the other, the sharpness of their punishment. As to their errors, indeed, no man of sense can deny that they are most absurd, and I wonder that such monstrous opinions could come into the mind of any Christian; but such is the state of human weakness, if we are left never so little awhile destitute of the divine light, whither is it we do not fall? And we have great reason to give God thanks that I hear not of any Englishman that is inclined to this madness. As to these fanatical sects, therefore, it is certain they are by no means to be countenanced in a commonwealth, but in my opinion ought to be suppressed by proper correction. But to *roast alive* the bodies of poor wretches, that offend rather through blindness of judgment than perverseness of will, in fire and flames, raging with pitch and brimstone, is a hard-hearted thing, and more agreeable to the practice of the Romanists than the custom of the gospellers; yea, is evidently of the same kind, as if it had flowed from the Romish priests, from the first author of such cruelty, Innocent the third. Oh, that none had ever brought such a Phalarian bull into the meek church of Christ! I do not speak such things because I am pleased with their wickedness, or favour the errors of any man; but seeing that I myself am a man, I must therefore favour the life of man; not that he should err, but that he should repent. Nay, my pity extends not only to the life of man, but also to the beasts.

"For so it is perhaps a folly in my; but I speak the truth, that I can hardly pass by a slaughter-house where cattle are killing, but my mind shrinks back with a secret sense of

their pains. And truly I greatly admire the clemency of God in this, who had such respect to the mean brute creatures formerly prepared for sacrifices, that they must not be committed to the flames before their blood had been poured out at the foot of the altar. Whence we may gather, that in inflicting of punishments, though just, we must not be over rigorous, but temper the sharpness of rigour with clemency. Wherefore, if I may be so bold with the majesty of so great a princess, I humbly beg of your royal highnesss, for the sake of Christ, who was consecrated to suffer for the lives of many, this favour at my request, which even the divine clemency would engage you to; that if it may be, (and what cannot your authority do in these cases?) these miserable wretches may be spared; at least that a stop may be put to the horror, by changing the punishment into some other kind. There are excommunications, and close imprisonments; there are bonds; there is perpetual banishment, burning of the hand and whipping, or even slavery itself. This one thing I most earnestly beg, that the flames of Smithfield, so long ago extinguished by your happy government, may not be again revived. But if I may not obtain this, I pray with the greatest earnestness that out of your great pity you would grant us a month or two in which we may try whether the Lord will give them grace to turn from their dangerous errors, lest with the destruction of their bodies their souls be in danger of eternal ruin."

This melting pathetic letter had but little effect upon the high and bigotted spirit of Elizabeth. She answered, "That if after a month_s reprieve, and conference with divines, they would not recant their errors, they should certainly suffer." This they refused to do, and hereupon the writ *De haeretico comburendo*, which for seventeen years had only hung up *in terrorem*, was now put in execution; and these two Baptists, John Wielmaker and Henry Tor Woort, were burnt in Smithfield, July 22.

In the year 1589, Dr. Some, a man of great note, and a violent churchman, published a treatise against some of the puritans, Greenwood, Barrow, Penry, and others. In this he attempts to show what agreement there was between them and the English Anabaptists. The opinions he charges the Anabaptists with, when, as Crosby says, they are stripped of the dress which he had put upon them, are as follow--"That the ministers of the gospel ought to be maintained by the voluntary contributions of the people--that the civil power has no right to make and impose ecclesiastical laws--that the high commission court was an anti-christian usurpation--that those who are qualified to teach ought not to be hindered by the civil power--that though the Lord_s prayer be a rule and foundation of prayer, yet it is not to be used as a form and that no forms of prayer ought to be imposed on the church--that the baptism administered by the church of Rome is invalid--that a true constitution and discipline are essential to a true church, and that the worship of God in the church of England is in many things defective."--The doctor touches but briefly, says Crosby, on their opinion of baptizing believers only, and brings up the rear of his accusations with saying, "they esteem it blasphemy for any man to arrogate to himself the title of Doctor of Divinity" that is, as he explains it, to be called Rabbi, or master of other men_s faith. [Crosby, vol. i. p. 77]

Who does not see in these articles the genuine principles of the new testament, and the true ground upon which as protestant dissenters we ought to take our stand? The right of

the magistrate to interfere in religious matters being denied, religious establishments, which are founded upon the assumption of that principle, must be necessarily dissented from, and, if the principle can be proved to be false, must fall with it.

The Baptists of the present day have no reason to be ashamed of these sentiments of their predecessors, who at a time when the principles of dissent were so imperfectly understood, had such clear ideas on the subject, and sealed the truth with their blood.

From Dr. Some we learn also that at the time when he wrote, 1589, "There were several Anabaptistical conventicles in London and other places." It seems then the Baptists had at this early period formed distinct churches of persons of their own sentiments, both in London, and in different parts of the country. He adds, "Some persons of these sentiments have been bred at our universities." That is to say, some of the zealous puritanical divines had pursued their principles to their legitimate consequences, and had rejected infant baptism, with the other ceremonies of the church. The doctor, to expose the Baptists, relates a story of one whom he calls T.L., "who at a conventicle in London took upon him to expound the scriptures, conceive long prayers on a sudden, and to excommunicate two persons who were formerly of that brotherhood, but had now left them." Who this T.L. was we know not; but it clearly appears that he was the pastor of the church, and that in their name, he declared that some persons who had left them were no longer of their communion. His explaining the scriptures and praying without the use of a form, will not now be considered as either unaccountable or heretical. We are much obliged to Dr. Some for enabling us to trace the history of our churches in England, since the Reformation, to a period almost as early as that of the presbyterian churches, the first of which in England was founded at Wandsworth in the year 1572.

The persons against whom Dr. Some wrote were men of respectable talents, and their names shine with distinguished lustre in the annals of the puritans. They were eminent divines, and illustrious martyrs in the cause of our Lord Jesus Christ. Barrow and Greenwood, after being kept in prison for many months, and there exposed to all the severities of cold, hunger, and nakedness, were, on the last day of March 1592, brought to Tyburn in a cart, and exposed under the gallows a long time, to see whether the terrors of death would affright them; but remaining constant, they were taken back to Newgate, and on April 6, they were carried a second time to Tyburn and executed. At the place of execution they gave such testimonies of their unfeigned piety towards God, and loyalty to the queen, and prayed so earnestly for her long and prosperous reign, that when Dr. Reynolds, who attended them, reported their behaviour to her majesty, she is said to have expressed her sorrow that she had yielded to their death.

The persecution of those who separated from the church of England, was from this time to end of the queen's reign very severe.

Many of them on this account left the kingdom; and those who remained in it were perpetually harassed and tormented by fines and imprisonment. That the Baptists were deeply involved in the suffering of these times, may be gathered from the supplication of the justices of the peace for the county of Norfolk. A complaint had been made to them of

the long and illegal imprisonment of a puritan, the Rev. Robert Wright, and hereupon their worships were pleased to address Aylmer, bishop of London, on his behalf. This so offended his lordship, that he drew up twelve articles of impeachment against the justices themselves, and caused them to be summoned before the queen and council to answer for their misdemeanors.

These high proceedings of the bishop disgusted both the clergy and the whole country; and the justices, notwithstanding his late citation of them before the council, wrote to their honours, praying them to interpose in behalf of divers godly ministers. The words of this supplication, says Neal, are worth remembering, because they discover the cruelty of the commissioners; who made no distinction between the vilest of criminals and conscientious ministers.--"The faithful ministers of the word (say they) are marshalled with the worst malefactors; presented, indicted, arraigned, and condemned, for matters, as we presume, of very slender moment, some for leaving the holidays unbidden; some for singing the psalm *Nune Dimittis* in the morning; some for turning the questions in baptism concerning faith, from the infants to the godfathers, which is but you for thou; some for leaving out the cross in baptism; some for leaving out the ring in marriage. A most pitiful thing it is to see the back of the law turned to the adversary [the papists] and the edge with all its sharpness laid upon the sound and true-hearted subject.

"We regard order to be the rule of the Spirit of God, and desire uniformity in all the duties of the church, according to the proportion of faith: but if these weak ceremonies are so indifferent as to be left to the discretion of ministers, we think it (under correction) very hard to have them go under so hard handling, to the utter discredit of their whole ministry, and the profession of the truth.

"We serve her majesty and the country [as justices of the peace] according to law. We reverence the law, and lawmaker: when the law speaks, we keep silence: when it commandeth, we obey. By law we proceed against all offenders: we touch none that the law spareth, and spare none that the law toucheth. We allow not of papists; of the family of Love; of Anabaptists, or Brownists. No, we punish all these. Yet we are christened with the odious name of puritans; a term compounded of the heresies above mentioned, which we disclaim. The papists pretend to be immaculate: the family of Love cannot sin, they being deified, as they say, in God. But we groan under the burden of our sins, and confess them to God; and at the same time we labour to keep ourselves and our profession unblamable. This is our puritanism; a name given to such magistrates and ministers, and others, as have a strict eye upon their juggling.

"We think ourselves bound in duty to unfold these matters to your lordships; and if you shall please to call us to the proof of them, it is the thing we most desire."

When such severities were practised against men who ventured to alter a *pronoun* in the baptismal service, for the relief of burdened consciences, it is certain that those called Anabaptists, who rejected the rite itself, would not escape chastisement. Even the justices of Norfolk say, "we punish these." It is remarkable, that while they mention some things that made other sects odious, they say nothing to the discredit of the Baptists. May we not

infer that their only error was a denial of infant baptism? But for this crime they were considered as unfit to reside in a Christian country among Christian people, and therefore the queen published a royal proclamation commanding all Anabaptists and other heretics to leave the kingdom, whether they were natives or foreigners, under the penalties of imprisonment and loss of goods. Consequently all Baptists were obliged either to conceal their sentiments, or fly into those countries where they might without molestation worship God according to the dictates of conscience. Many of them went over to Holland; so that there were perhaps fewer dissenters in England of all denominations at this time than at any period since the reformation. The terrors of the Star chamber, and the High commission court, or as it has been more properly called, the English inquisition, operated so powerfully as almost to exterminate all those who had the simplicity and godly sincerity to oppose that church, which with bold effrontery had declared, "The church hath power to decree rites and ceremonies, and authority in matters of faith;" to which might have been added,--and a disposition to punish those who will not implicitly receive her dogmas.

Things were in this state at that time of the queen's death, which took place March 24, 1602, in the seventieth year of her age, and the forty-fifth of her reign. Neal says, "As to her religion, she affected a middle way between popery and puritanism, though she was more inclined to the former. She understood not the rights of conscience in matters of religion, and is therefore justly charged with persecuting principles. More sanguinary laws were made in her reign than in those of any of her predecessors. Her hands were stained with the blood of papists and puritans: the former were executed for denying her supremacy, and the latter for sedition and non-conformity."

VOLUME I.

CHAPTER IV

A.D. 1602-1625

The persecuted puritans found in Holland an asylum which sheltered them from the rage of their enemies; and with the permission of the states, they founded churches at Amsterdam, Arnheim, Middleburg, Leyden, and other places. One of the churches at Amsterdam was founded by Mr. John Smyth, and was of the Baptist denomination. [*Life of Ainsworth*, p. 36]

In order to preserve the connection of our history, it will be necessary to give some account of Mr. Smyth, who was the first pastor of this church. He was one of the disciples of Robert Brown, from whom the Brownists derived their name. At what time he embraced these sentiments, we are not informed; but he is spoken of as one of their leaders in 1592. He was previously a beneficed minister in the church of England, at Gainsborough, in Lincolnshire. Before his secession, he spent nine months in studying the controversy, and held a disputation with Mr. Hildersham, and some other divines, on conformity to the ceremonies, and on the use of prescribed forms of prayer. In the above-mentioned county, and on the borders of Yorkshire and Nottinghamshire, the principles

of the separation had made an extensive impression. Mr. Smyth, the pastor of one of their churches, and Mr. Robinson and Mr. Clifton, the co-pastors of another church, being harassed by the High commission court, removed with their followers to Holland. Mr. Smyth and his followers settled at Amsterdam, 1606, and joined themselves to the English church of which Johnson was pastor, and Ainsworth teacher. It was not long, however, before a serious breach took place. The subjects of debate which gave rise to this division, are said to have been certain opinions very similar to those afterwards espoused by the Arminians. Mr. Smyth is said to have maintained the doctrines of free will and universal redemption; to have opposed the predestination of particular individuals to eternal life, and the doctrine of original sin; and to have maintained that believers might fall from that grace which would have saved them, if they had continued in it. In addition to this, Mr. Smyth differed from them on the subject of baptism. The steps which led him to the rejection of infant baptism, were the following.

The Brownists denied that the church of England was a true church, and that her ministers acted under a divine commission, and consequently considered every ordinance administered by them null and void. They were guilty, however, of this inconsistency, that while they reordained their ministers, they did not renew their baptism. The impropriety of this conduct was discovered by Mr. Smyth, whose doubts concerning the validity of baptism in the established church, led him eventually to renounce infant baptism altogether. Upon a further consideration of the subject, he saw reason to conclude that immersion was the true and proper meaning of the word baptism, and that it should be administered to those only who were capable of professing faith in Christ.

The other ministers of the separation appear to have treated Mr. Smyth with great asperity. They charged him with having proclaimed open war against God's everlasting covenant, and as being one who would murder the souls of babes and sucklings, by depriving them of the visible seals of salvation. They also said, that not being able to find any minister who had been baptized on a profession of faith, and objecting to the doctrinal sentiments of the German Baptists, he had profaned the covenant by first baptizing himself, and afterwards his followers.

In England, the learned and excellent Bishop Hall employed his pen against him and the ministers of the separation, in a work entitled, *A common Apology of the Church of England, against the unjust challengers of the over just sect, commonly called Brownists, &c.* The dedication prefixed to this work is as follows—"To our gracious and blessed mother, the church of England, the meanest of all her children dedicates this her apology, and wisheth all peace and happiness." The Bishop proceeds by saying, "no less than a year and a half is past since I wrote a loving monitory letter to two of thine unworthy sons, [Smyth and Robinson] which I heard were fled from thee in person, in affection, and somewhat in opinion. Supposing them yet thine in the main substance, though in some circumstances their own. Since which, one of them hath washed off thy font-water as unclean, and hath written desperately against thee and his own fellows."

It is remarkable that the bishop says nothing of Mr. Smyth's having baptized himself, which from the particular way in which he speaks of him and of what he considered his

errors, he doubtless would have done, if this had been the case. There is no doubt but this silly charge was fabricated by his enemies, and it is an astonishing instance of credulity that writers of eminent talents have contributed to perpetuate the slander. The character which Bishop Hall gives of him, renders this charge altogether improbable. Addressing Mr. Robinson, he says, "My knowledge of Master Smyth whom you followed, and yourself, would not let me think of you as you deserved. The truth is, my charity and your uncharitableness, have led us to mistake each other. I hoped you had been one of their guides; both because Lincolnshire was your country, and Master Smyth your oracle and general._I wrote not to you alone. What is become of your partners, yea, your guide? Woe is me, he hath renounced Christendom with our church, and hath washed off his former waters with new, and now condemns you for separating so far. He tells you true: your station is unsafe: either you must go forward to him, or back to us. There is no remedy: either you must go forward to anabaptism, or come back to us. All your rabbins cannot answer that charge of your rebaptized brother. If we be a true church, you must return; if we be not, as a false church is no church of God, you must rebaptize. If our baptism be good, then is our constitution good._As for the title of ring-leader, wherewith I stiled this pamphleteer; if I have given him too much honour in his sect, I am sorry. Perhaps I should have put him, (pardon a homely, but in this sense not unusual, word) in the tail of his train: perhaps I should have endorsed my letter to Master Smyth and his shadow." [p. 723-794]

From all these expressions, which show the eminence of Mr. Smyth among the ministers of the separation, it is evident he was considered as a person of great consequence, and that his disciples were very numerous. This corroborates which is said by Ephraim Pagit; that "he was accounted one of the grandees of the separation, and that he and his followers did at once as it were swallow up all the rest of the separation."
[*Heresiography*, p. 62,64]

In the introduction prefixed to a work printed in Holland in the year 1609, and entitled, *The character of the Beast, or the false constitution of the church discovered in certain passages betwixt Mr. R. Clifton and John Smyth, concerning the Christian baptism of new creatures or new born babes in Christ: and false baptism of infants born after the flesh. Referred to two propositions, 1. That infants are not to be baptized. 2. That Antichristians converted are to be admitted into the true church by baptism.* Mr. Smyth thus speaks in vindication of the separation of himself and friends from the Brownists, because infant baptism was retained in their churches:--"Be it known therefore to all the separation, that we account them in respect of their constitution to be as very a harlot as either her mother England, or her grandmother Rome is, out of whose loins she came; And although once in our ignorance we have acknowledged her a true church; yet now being better informed, we revoke this our erroneous judgment, and protest against her as well for her false constitution as for her false ministry, worship, and government. The true constitution of the church is of a new creature, baptized into the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost: the false constitution is of infant_s baptized, &c."

The manner of his reasoning concerning the restoration of the ordinance of baptism, when lost, is as follows. "The Anabaptists, as you call them, do not set up a new covenant

and gospel, though they set up a new or apostolic baptism, which antichrist had overthrown: and whereas you say they have no warrant to baptize themselves, I say, as much as you have to set up a new church, yea, fully as much. For if a true church may be erected, which is the most noble ordinance of the new testament, then much more baptism: and if a true church cannot be erected without baptism, for baptism is the visible sign of the church, as disciples are the matter; then seeing you confess that a true church may be erected, you cannot deny (though you do deny it in opposing the truth) that baptism may be also recovered. And seeing, when all Christ_s visible ordinances are lost, either men must recover them again, or must let them alone: if they let them alone till extraordinary men come with miracles and tongues, as the apostles did, then men are Familists; (for that is their opinion) or if they must recover them, men must begin so to do; and then two men joining together can make a church, as you say. Why might they not then baptize, seeing they cannot conjoin into Christ without baptism? (Matt. 28:19; 28:10; Gal. 3:27.) But it is evident that all Christ_s commandments must be obeyed: ergo, this commandment of having and using the communion of the church, ministry, worship, and government, those holy means of salvation which the Lord in his mercy has given us in his covenant, and commanded us to use. And if all the commandments of God must be obeyed, then this of baptism, and this warrant is sufficient for assuming baptism. Now for baptizing a man_s self, there is as good warrant as for a man_s churching himself: for two men singly are no church: jointly they are a church, and they both of them put a church upon themselves: for as both these persons unchurched, yet have power to assume the church, each of them for himself and others in communion; so each of them unbaptized, hath power to assume baptism for himself with others in communion." [Page 58]

Here are two principles laid down by Mr. Smyth, which contradict the account given of him. The first is, that upon the supposition of the true baptism being lost for some time through the disuse of it, it is necessary there should be two persons to unite in the administration. The second is, that the first administrator must be a member of some church, who shall call and empower him to administer it to the other members.

Now it is reasonable to suppose that his practice was conformable to the above principles; and as there is mention made of Mr. Helwisse and Mr. John Morton [Crosby, v. i. p. 99], two ministers who were of his opinion, and who joined with him in the rules which he laid down, their method must have been this:--the seceders must first have formed themselves into a church, and then the church must have appointed two of its ministers to restore the ordinance by baptizing each other, and after that to baptize the rest of the church.

Mr. Smyth must have died soon after his work was printed; for in 1611 there appeared *A confession of faith*, published by the remainder of Mr. Smyth_s company, with an appendix giving some account of his last sickness and death. A few articles of this confession are preserved by Crosby, in his first volume, extracted from the works of Mr. Smyth, by Mr. Robinson, pastor of the Brownist church at Leyden. In the Appendix to Crosby_s second volume this confession is given in 27 articles. From this it appears that their sentiments resembled those which are now denominated Arminian; but there is no

evidence of their holding those silly and erroneous opinions which they have been charged with by their enemies.

James the first was now sitting on the throne of England, a prince who for vanity and bigotry has perhaps been seldom equaled. [James was James VI, king of Scotland, from 1567-1625, and was James I, king of England, from 1603-1625] From such a king, and from such bishops as Whitgift and Bancroft, the puritans of whatever denomination could expect no favour. "The king (says Rapin) intimated at the first, that he would have regard to the tender consciences of such Catholics as could not comply with the received doctrine of the church of England; but in this there was not the least indulgence for the tender consciences of the puritans: these were all a set of obstinate people, who deserved to have no favour shewed them." [*Hist. of England*, vol. ii. p. 163]

In the year 1608, one Enoch Clapham wrote a small piece entitled, *Errors on the right hand, against the several sects of protestants in those times*; in which he represented by way of dialogue, the opinions which each sect held, and somewhat of their state and condition. He notices their fleeing out of their own nation to plant a church among a people of another language; and that they alleged in their defence, Elijah's fleeing in time of persecution, and our Saviour's advice to his disciples, if they were persecuted in one city to flee into another. He also complains of those who remained in England, for leaving the public assemblies, and running into woods and meadows, and meeting in bye stables, barns and haylofts, for service.

He distinguishes the Anabaptists from the puritans and Brownists on the one hand, and from the Arians and Socinians on the other; and represents them all as being zealous opposers of each other.

The Anabaptists, according to his account, held that repentance and faith must precede baptism; that the baptism of the church of England and of the puritans was invalid, and that the true baptism was amongst them. He says farther, that they complained of the term Anabaptist as a name of reproach cast upon them; and also takes notice that some of this opinion were Dutchmen, who, besides the denial of infant baptism, held that it was unlawful to bear arms, &c. That there were others who went under the denomination that were Englishmen, to whom he does not so directly charge the former opinions, but only the denial of their first baptism, and separating both from the established church and other dissenters; adding that they came out from the Brownists, and that there was a congregation of them in Holland. [Crosby, vol. i. p. 88]

The congregation to which he refers is doubtless that which we have mentioned, under the care of Mr. Smyth, which existed at this time in Holland; and from what Mr. Johnson, pastor of one of the English churches, says in a work published in 1617, it is evident that his ministry was very successful, and that his principles were extensively embraced. "Of which point [infant baptism] and of sundry objections thereabout, I have treated (says he) the more largely, considering how great the error is in the denial thereof, and how greatly it spreadeth, both in these parts, and of late in our own country, that is England." [Crosby, vol. i. p. 91]

In the work of Enoch Clapham, before mentioned, the Anabaptist is asked what religion he is of; and is made to answer, "Of the true religion, commonly termed Anabaptism, from our baptizing."--When he is asked concerning the church or congregation he was connected with in Holland; he answers, "There be certain English people of us that came out from the Brownists."--When the Arian says, I am of the mind that there is no true baptism upon earth; he replies, "I pray thee son, say not so: the congregation I am of, can and doth administer true baptism."--When an enquirer after truth offers, upon his proving what he has said, to leave his old religion; the Anabaptist answers, "You may say, if God will give you grace to leave it; for it is a peculiar grace to leave Sodom and Egypt, spiritually so called." When the same person offers to join with them, and firmly betake himself to their faith; the Anabaptist replies, "The dew of heaven come upon you: to-morrow I will bring you into our sacred congregation, that so you may come to be informed in the faith, and after that be purely baptized."

This account being given by one who wrote against the Baptists, may be safely relied on, especially as he assures his reader, that the characters which he gives of each sect was not without sundry years experience had of them all.

Mr. Smyth, the pastor of the church at Amsterdam, was succeeded by Mr. Thomas Helwisse, who had been baptized by him, and was one of the persons who was excommunicated with him, on account of their objecting to the validity of infant baptism. He had fled with the Brownists to Holland, to escape persecution. While he continued with them he was esteemed a man of eminent faith, charity, and spiritual gifts. Though he had not the advantage of a learned education, he appears by his writings to have been a man of good natural parts, which had been improved by studious application.

Soon after the death of Mr. Smyth, Mr. Helwisse began to reflect upon the impropriety of his own conduct and that of the other English dissenters, in leaving their country and friends, and flying into a strange land to escape persecution. Thinking this might have arisen from fear and cowardice, he concluded they ought rather to bear a testimony to the truth in their own land, where it was in danger of being wholly extinguished; and to encourage their brethren, who were then suffering persecution for Christ's sake, to "hold fast the profession of their faith without wavering." He and his friends accordingly left Holland, and settled in London, where they continued their church state, and assembled for worship, as often, and as publicly, as the spirit of the times would permit. In a treatise written by Mr. Helwisse, entitled, *A short declaration*, &c. he justified their conduct by endeavouring to show in what cases it was unlawful to fly in times of persecution. This gave great offence to the puritans who were in exile, who in a work written against him by Mr. Robinson, charged him with "vain glory, and with courting persecution by challenging the king and the state to their faces, &c." How long Mr. Helwisse continued the elder of this church, Crosby says, he could not find, but that the books wrote against them show that they went on with great courage and resolution; and notwithstanding the severities used against them by the civil power, increased greatly in their number. [Crosby, vol. i. 271,272]

Their intrepidity and danger may be judged of by the following circumstance. In the year 1614 the king, in order to show his zeal against heresy, took an opportunity to exercise it, by burning alive two of his subjects. These were Bartholomew Legate, who was charged with Arianism, and burnt in Smithfield, March 18, 1611; and Edward Wightman, a Baptist, of the town of Burton upon Trent, who was convicted Dec. 14, 1611, of divers heresies, before the Bishop of Litchfield and Coventry; and being delivered up to the secular power, was burnt at Litchfield on the 11th of April following.

Amongst other charges brought against him are these:--That the baptizing of infants is an abominable custom; that the Lord's supper and baptism are not to be celebrated as they are now practiced in the church of England; and that Christianity is not wholly professed and preached in the church of England, but only in part." Who would have thought that a person would have been burnt by protestants for such opinions! Happily for our native country, this day of bigotry is past, and Edward Wightman was the last who suffered death in this way. It is rather a curious fact, that on the supposition of William Sautry, the Lollard, opposing infant baptism, which is highly probable, the Baptists have had the honour of leading the van, and bring up the rear of that part of the noble army of English martyrs, who have laid down their lives at the stake.

The persecution increased so much against the puritans, that in this year many of them left the country and fled to America. Amongst these were some Baptists, of whom honourable mention is made in Cotton Mather's *History of America*; but as the history of the Baptists in that part of the world does not come within our design, we must refer the reader to their history, published in 3 vols. octavo, by the Rev. Isaac Backus, of New England.

There were however many who remained, for in 1615, the Baptists in England published a small treatise, entitled, *Persecution judged and condemned: in a discourse between an Antichristian and a Christian. Proving by the law of God and of the land, and by King James his many testimonies, that no man ought to be persecuted for his religion, so he testifie his allegiance by the oath appointed by law. Proving also, that the spiritual power in England, is the image of the spiritual cruel power of Rome, or that the beast mentioned Rev. 13. Manifesting the fearful estate of those who are subject to such powers, that tyrannize over the conscience; and shewing the unlawfulness of flying because of the trouble men see or fear is coming upon them.*

In this Piece they endeavoured to justify their separation from the church of England, and prove that every man has a right to judge for himself in matters of religion; and that to persecute on that account was illegal and anti-christian; contrary to the laws of God, as well as to several declarations of the king's majesty. They also assert their opinion respecting baptism, and show the invalidity of that baptism which was administered either in the established church or among the other dissenters, and clear themselves of several errors which had been unjustly imputed to them. It appears to have been approved by the whole body of Baptists who remained in England; for at the end of the preface they subscribe themselves "Christ's unworthy witnesses, his majesty's faithful subjects, commonly (but most falsely) called Anabaptists."

Though there is no name to this work, yet it is evidently the production of Mr. Helwisse and his friends. At the close of it they refer the reader to their confession published four years before, to form a judgment of their sentiments on the person of Christ; the lawfulness of magistrates, &c. &c. In the Epistle, "to all that truly wish Jerusalem's prosperity, and Babylon's destruction," they say, "It cannot but with high thankfulness to God, and to the King, he acknowledged of all, that the King's Majesty is no blood-thirsty man, for if he were, bodily destruction should be the portion of all that fear God, and endeavour to walk in his ways; as may be seen in the primitive times of this spiritual power, or beast of England, after that King Henry the Eighth had cast off the Romish beast and since (so far as leave has been granted them) by hanging, burning, banishing, imprisoning, and what not, as the particulars might be named. Yet our most humble desire of our Lord the King is, that he would not give his power to force his faithful subjects to dissemble, to believe as he believes, in the least measure of persecution; though it is no small persecution to lye many years in filthy prisons, in hunger, cold, idleness, divided from wife, family, calling, left in continual miseries and temptations, so as death would be to many less persecution; seeing his Majesty confesseth, that *to change the mind must be the work of God*. And of the Lord Bishops we desire, that they would a little leave off persecuting those that cannot believe as they, till they have proved that God is well pleased therewith, and the souls of such as submit are in safety from condemnation; let them prove this, and we protest we will for ever submit unto them, and so will thousands; and therefore if there be any spark of grace in them, let them set themselves to give satisfaction either by word or writing, or both. But if they will not but continue their cruel courses as they have done, let them yet remember that they must come to judgment, and have their abominations set in order before them, and be torn in pieces when none shall deliver them."

This work is a well written pamphlet of forty-eight quarto pages, in the form of a dialogue between a *Christian*, an *Antichristian*, and an *Indifferent person*. The principles of Dissenters and of the Baptists are clearly stated; and certainly proves that at this early period they were numerous and respectable; and had for many years been great sufferers, it should seem from the period of the reformation, from the manner in which they speak of the persecutions they had endured from the bishops of the church of England. It concludes by the Indifferent person saying, "Well, you will yet be called Anabaptists, because you deny baptism to infants." To which the Christian answers, "So were Christians before us called sects; and so they may call John Baptist, Jesus Christ himself, and his apostles *Anabaptists*; for we profess and practise no otherwise herein, than they, namely, *The baptizing of such as confess with the mouth the belief of the heart*. And if they be Anabaptists that deny baptism when God hath appointed it, they, and not we are Anabaptists. But the Lord give them repentance, that their sins may be put away, and never laid to their charge, even for his Christ's sake. Amen." [p. 48]

Another book was published in 1618, vindicating the principles of the Baptists. This was translated from the Dutch, and is said by Dr. Wall and others to have been the first *printed* in the English language against the baptism of infants. Had it been said, the first book that was published in England it might have been true, on account of the great difficulty there was in publishing works against the established religion, but it is certain

there were many books in English written and printed in vindication of the principles of the Baptists, several years before this period. Crosby says that he had not heard of this book being answered till thirty years afterward, when Mr. Thomas Cobbett, of New England, published a vindication of the right of infants to church membership and baptism.

In 1620, the Baptists presented a humble supplication to the king when the parliament was sitting. This was dedicated, *To the high and mighty King, James, by the grace of God, King of Great Britain, France, and Ireland. To the Right Excellent and Noble Prince, Charles, Prince of Wales, &c. To all the Right Honourable Nobility, Grace and Honourable Judges, and to all other the Right Worshipful Gentry, of all estates and degrees, assembled in this present parliament. Right High and Mighty;--Right Excellent and Noble;--Right Honourable, and Right Worshipful.* In this, they in the first place acknowledge their obligation to pray for Kings, and all that are in authority, and appeal to God that it was their constant practice so to do. They then set forth, that their miseries were not only the taking away of their goods, but also long and lingering imprisonments for many years in divers counties in England, in which many had died, leaving their widows and several small children behind them, and all because they durst not join in such worship as they thought contrary to the will of God. [p. 2] After stating their sentiments, and challenging their enemies to accuse them of any disloyalty to his majesty, or of doing any injury to their neighbours, they conclude by praying for the king's majesty, for his royal highness the prince, and the honourable houses of parliament; calling God the searcher of hearts to witness that they were loyal subjects to his majesty, not for fear only, but also for conscience sake, subscribing themselves those who are unjustly called Anabaptists. [p. 26]

This petition is divided into ten parts, and appears to be written with considerable ability. We can only give the titles of the chapters, but from these the contents may be judged of.

1. "The Rule of Faith is the doctrine of the Holy Ghost contained in the Sacred Scriptures, and not any church, council, Prince, or Potentate, nor any mortal man whatsoever.
2. The interpreter of this rule is the scriptures, and spirit of God in whomsoever.
3. That the Spirit of God, to understand and interpret the scriptures, is given to all and every particular person, that fear and obey God, of what degree soever they be; and not to the wicked.
4. Those that fear and obey God, and so have the spirit of God to search out and know the mind of God in the Scriptures, are commonly and for the most part, the simple, poor, despised, &c.
5. The learned in human learning, do commonly and for the most part err, and know not the truth, but persecute it and the professors of it; and therefore are no farther to be followed than we see them agree with truth.
6. Persecution for conscience, is against the doctrine of Jesus Christ, King of Kings.
7. Persecution for conscience, is against the profession and practice of famous princes.
8. Persecution for cause of conscience, is condemned by the ancient and later writers, yea, by Puritans and Papists.
9. It is no prejudice to the commonwealth if freedom of religion were suffered, but would make it flourish.
10. Kings are not deprived of any power given them of God, when they maintain freedom for cause of conscience.

In the 7th chapter they thus remind the King of his own sentiments on this subject. "We beseech your Majesty we may relate your own worthy sayings, in your Majesty_s speech to parliament, 1609. Your Highness saith, *It is a sure rule in divinity, that God never loves to plant his church by violence and blood-shed, &c.* And in your Highness_s apology, p. 4, speaking of such papists as took the oath, thus: *I gave a good proof that I intended no persecution against them for conscience cause, but only desired to be secured for civil obedience, which for conscience cause they were bound to perform.* And page 60, speaking of Blackwel the Arch-Priest, your Majesty saith, *It was never my intention to lay any thing to the said Arch-Priest_s charge, as I have never done to any for cause of conscience, &c.* And in your Highness_s exposition on Rev. 20 printed 1588, and after 1603, your Majesty truly writeth thus: sixthly, *The compassing of the saints, and besieging of the beloved city, declareth unto us a certain note of a false church to be persecution; For they come to seek the faithful, the faithful are those that are sought: the wicked are the besiegers, the faithful be besieged.*" [p. 20]

It is an awful consideration, that a Prince who so well understood the rights of conscience, and the distinction betwixt those duties which Christians owed to God, and those which they were bound to observe towards the civil power, should act so diametrically opposite to his sentiments. The uncommon intrepidity of the Baptists, is evinced by their making their solemn appeal to the King and his parliament, at a time when they were exposed to all their resentments; and when, by their own principles, they were prevented from attempting to escape from the storm which threatened them.

This Petition was published in 1620, and the former pamphlet of 1615 reprinted with it. Both these were also reprinted in 1662, with the design, as stated in the title page, "for the establishing some and convincing others."

From this also it appears that there were still Baptists in many parts of the kingdom; for this petition states that they had suffered imprisonment for "many years in divers counties in England." We learn also by what has been written against them, that, notwithstanding all opposition, they kept up their separate meetings, and had many disciples who took joyfully the spoiling of their goods, endured cruel mockings, and probably scourgings also, yea, moreover bonds and imprisonments, rather than violate their consciences, or desert their principles.

We have further information respecting their numbers and principles, from a letter written by a person in London who had joined the Baptists, to his old friends, in which he defends his conduct and sentiments. This letter happening to fall into the hands of a member of the church of England, it was published with an answer annexed to it. As it discovers something of the principles, and the spirit of the Baptists at that time, we shall give it entire for the gratification of our readers,

"Beloved friends,

"The ancient love that I have had towards you provoketh me to testify that I have not forgotten you, but an desirous still to shew my unfeigned love

to you in any thing I may. I make no question but you have heard divers false reports of me, although among the same some truths; and that you may be truly informed of my state, I thought good to write a few words unto you, hoping that you will not speak evil of that which you know not, nor condemn a man unheard. The thing wherein I differ from the church of England is; they say at their washing or baptizing their infants, that they are members, of Christ's holy church, children of God, and inheritors of the kingdom of heaven. This I dare not believe; for the scriptures of God declare, that neither flesh nor the washing of flesh can save. Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; for that which is born of the flesh is flesh, and we cannot enter into the kingdom of God except we be born again. They that have prerogative to be the sons of God, must be born of God, even believe in his name; and the washing of the filth of the flesh is not the baptism that saveth, but the answer of a good conscience towards God. If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature. The consequence of this is, that infants are not to be baptized, nor can they be Christians but such only who confess their faith as the scriptures teach. [Matt. 28:19; Mark 16:5; John 1:12; 3:5; Gal. 6:5; 1 Pet. 3:21] from whence the word *church* is taken, can witness that it signifieth *a people called out*; and so the church of Christ is a company called out of their former state wherein they were by nature, out of Babylon, wherein they have been in spiritual bondage to the spiritual antichrist, and from having fellowship in spiritual worship with unbelievers and ungodly men. From all, whosoever cometh, they are fit timber for this spiritual building, which is a habitation of God by the Spirit, and the household of faith. Those who thus come out of nature's Egyptian bondage, and the fellowship of the children of Belial, being new creatures, and so holy brethren, are made God's house or church, through being knit together by the Spirit of God, and baptized into his body, which is the church. This being undeniably the church of Christ, infants cannot be of it; for they cannot be called out as afore said. Known wicked men cannot be of it, because they are not called out; nor antichrist's spiritual bondage cannot be of it, because that is a habitation of devil's, and all God's people must go out of that. [Acts 2:38,41; 8:12,37; 9:18; 10:47; 16:31; 18:8; 19:3; 1 Cor. 13:13; 2 Cor. 6:4; Gal. 2:20; Eph. 1:22,23; 2:22; Heb. 3:6; 1 Pet. 1:5; Rev. 18:2,4]

"What can be objected against this? Are not all the sons of God by faith? If any be in Christ, or a Christian, must he not be a new creature? I pray you do not take up the usual objection which the antichristians have learned of the Jews; _What tellest thou us of being made Christians only by faith in the Son, and so being made free? We are the children of Abraham, and of believers, and so are under the promise; *I will be the God of thee and of thy seed*. Thus are we and our children made free, whereas they neither do nor can believe in the Son._

"This is the Jewish antichrist fable: for Abraham had two sons, which were types of the two seeds, to which two covenants were made. The one born after the flesh, typing out the fleshly Israelites, which were the inhabitants of material Jerusalem, where was the material temple, and the performance of those carnal rites which endured to the time of reformation. The other by faith typing out the children of the faith of Abraham, which are the inhabitants of the spiritual Jerusalem, the new testament state, in which is the spiritual temple, the church of the living God, and the performance of all those spiritual ordinances which Christ as prophet and king thereof hath appointed, and which remains and cannot be shaken or altered. [Gen. 17; John 8:3; "Rom. 4:8,9; 2 Cor. 5:17; Gal. 3:26; 4:22; 6:15; Heb. 9:10; 12:23]

"Now if the old covenant be abolished, and all the appertainings thereof, as it is, being the similitude of heavenly things, even the covenant written in the book, the people, the tabernacle or temple, and all the ministering vessels, and a better covenant established upon better promises, and better temple and ministering vessels came instead thereof, procured and purchased by the blood of Jesus Christ, who is the new and living way; let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, sprinkling our hearts from an evil conscience, and baptized in our bodies with pure water; let us keep this profession of hope without wavering, and have no confidence in the flesh, to reap sanctification or justification thereby; but let us cast it away as dung and dross, for if any might plead privilege of being the child of the faithful, the apostle Paul might, as he saith. (See Phil. 3.) But it was nothing till he had the righteousness of God through faith: then was he baptized into Jesus Christ for the remission of his sins.

"This covenant, which we as the children of Abraham challenge, is the covenant of life and salvation by Jesus Christ, made to all the children of Abraham, as it was made to Abraham himself, to them that believe in him who raised up Jesus the Lord from the dead. As also the children of the flesh are not they: they must be put out, and must not be heirs with the faithful. If they that are of the flesh be heirs, faith is made void, and the promise of none effect. Therefore it is by faith, that it might come of grace, and that the promise might be sure to all the seed that are of the faith of Abraham, who is the father of all the faithful. They are his children: the promise of salvation is not made with both Abraham_s seeds, but with his own seed, they that are of the faith of Abraham. [Acts 8:26,32,39; Rom. 4:14; 9:8; Gal. 3:7,9,29; 4:30; Eph. 4:28; Hosea 8:18]

"These things may be strange to those who are strangers from the life of God, through the ignorance that is in them, because of the hardness of their hearts. God hath written them as the great things of his law, but they are counted by many as a strange thing. Yet wisdom is justified of all her children; and they that set their hearts to seek for wisdom as for silver, and

search for her as for treasure, they shall see the righteousness of these things as the light, and the evidence of them as the noon day. They that be wise will try these things by the true touchstone of the holy scriptures, and leave off rejoicing in men to hang their faith and profession on them; the which I fear not to supplicate God day and night on behalf of you all. To whose gracious direction I commit you, with a remembrance of my hearty love to every one; desiring but this favour, that for requital I may receive your loving answer.

"Yours to be commanded always in any children service.

"London, May 10, 1622. H.H."

The person who published this letter, replied to it in a work entitled, "Anabaptist Mystery of Iniquity Unmasked, by J.P. 1623."

It will be recollected that this letter was not designed by the writer for publication. It was certainly ungenerous that a private letter on a controverted subject should be sent to the press by an opponent who intended to write against it to unmask the iniquity it contained. But if the author could discover any iniquity in this letter, he must be very quick-sighted as its declarations, however simply stated, are evidently founded on scripture testimony.

In the reply there is some information of consequence, for which we are obliged to the writer. He states, that the Baptists separated from the established church, wrote many books in defence of their principles, and had multitudes of disciples; that it was their custom to produce a great number of scriptures to prove their doctrines; that they were in appearance more holy than those of the established church; that they dissuaded their disciples from reading the churchmen's books, hearing in their assemblies, or conferring with their learned men. He adds, that they "denied the doctrine of predestination, reprobation, final perseverance, and other truths." [Crosby, vol. i. p. 133] And says, "I suppose their seeds are sown among you not only by their apostles, but by their books." Of their holding these sentiments there is no proof given; but should it be true, it is probable that the Baptists at that period were principally General Baptists, who, as far as we have been able to decide, maintained sentiments very similar to those which were afterwards published by the famous Thomas Grantham.

In 1624 there appeared still greater champions of infant baptism. These were the famous Dod and Cleaver, who united their strength to oppose what they termed the erroneous positions of the Anabaptists. Their work was entitled, The patrimony of christian children. In the preface they apologize for their engaging in the controversy, by alleging that those of a contrary opinion were very industrious, and took great pains to propagate their doctrine; that divers persons of good note for piety had been prevailed upon by them; that several had intreated their help and assistance; and that they had been engaged already in private debates about this matter.

From these observations it appears that the Baptists had greatly increased in England in the reign of this king, during which every corrupt art was employed to extend the prerogative, to oppress all those who had either wisdom or honesty to think for themselves.

In the beginning of 1625, the king died, after having by his folly and hypocrisy laid the foundation of all the calamities of his son's reign. He had been flattered by ambitious courtiers, as the Solomon and Phoenix of the age; but in the opinion of Bishop Burnet, "he was the scorn of the age; a mere pedant, without true judgment, courage, or steadfastness; his reign being a continued course of mean practices." Rapin says, "he was neither a sound protestant, nor a good catholic; but had formed a plan of uniting both churches, which must have effectually ruined the protestant interest, for which indeed he never expressed any real concern." Neal says, "I am rather of opinion that all his religion was his pretended king-craft. He was certainly the meanest prince that ever sat upon the British throne. England never sunk so low in its reputation, nor was so much exposed to the scorn and ridicule of its neighbours as in his reign."

VOLUME I.

CHAPTER V.

A.D. 1625 - 1640: Charles I

Charles the first succeeded his father. Unhappily for this monarch, he had been educated in the principles of arbitrary power and religious bigotry. The conduct of James had been productive of general discontent, which his son did not take proper means to remove. Determined to be an absolute monarch, he drove his subjects into rebellion, and fell a victim to his own measures.

It was during this reign that an event took place among the Baptists, which has been commonly, but erroneously considered as the commencement of their history in this country. This was the formation of some churches in London, which many have supposed to be the first of this denomination in the kingdom. But could it even be proved that there were no distinct Baptist churches till this period, it would not follow that there were no Baptists, which however has been confidently stated. We have shown that persons professing similar sentiments with these of the present English Baptists, have been found in every period of the English church; and also that as early as the year 1509, from the testimony of Dr. Some, there were many churches of this description in London and in the country. During the reign of James, we have produced unexceptionable proof that there were great numbers of Baptists who suffered imprisonment in divers counties, and that a petition to the king was signed by many of their ministers. It is thought that the General Baptist church at Canterbury has existed for two hundred and fifty years, and that Joan Boucher, who was burnt in the reign of Edward the sixth, was a member of it. Though this is traditionary only, yet it is rendered probable from her being a Baptist, and being always called "Joan of Kent." It is also said that the church at Eyethorn in the same

county has been founded more than two hundred and thirty years, and that pastors of the name of John Knott served it during two hundred years of that period.

It is rather singular that Crosby should pay so little attention to his materials as to overlook these circumstances, and to confirm the common error respecting the origin of the Baptist churches, by the following statement. "In the year 1633, (says he,) the Baptists, who had hitherto been intermixed with other protestant dissenters without distinction, and who consequently shared with the Puritans in the persecutions of those times, began to separate themselves, and form distinct societies of their own. Concerning the first of these, I find the following account collected from a manuscript of Mr. William Kiffin.

"There was a congregation of protestant dissenters of the Independent persuasion in London, gathered in the year 1616, of which Mr. Henry Jacob was the first pastor; and after him succeeded Mr. John Lathorp, who was their minister in 1633. In this society several persons, finding that the congregation kept not to its first principles of separation, and being also convinced that baptism was not to be administered to infants, but to such as professed faith in Christ, desired that they might be dismissed from the communion, and allowed to form a distinct congregation in such order as was most agreeable to their own sentiments.

"The church, considering that they were now grown very numerous, and so more than could in those times of persecution conveniently meet together, and believing also that those persons acted from a principle of conscience, and not from obstinacy, agreed to allow them the liberty they desired, and that they should be constituted a distinct church; which was performed Sep. 12, 1633. And as they believed that baptism was not rightly administered to infants, so they looked upon the baptism they had received at that age as invalid, whereupon most or all of them received a new baptism. Their minister was a Mr. John Spilsbury. What number they were is uncertain, because in the mentioning of about twenty men and women, it is *added with divers others*.

"In the year 1638, Mr. William Kiffin, Mr. Thomas Wilson, and others, being of the same judgment, were upon their request dismissed to the said Mr. Spilsbury's congregation. In the year 1639, another congregation of Baptists was formed, whose place of meeting was in Crutched-friars; the chief promoters of which were Mr. Green, Mr. Paul Hobson, and Captain Spencer."

The account of Mr. Spilsbury's church is said in the margin to have been written from the records of that church; but from any thing that appears there is nothing to justify the conclusion of Crosby, that this was the first Baptist church; as the account relates simply to the origin of that particular church, to state which it is probable was Mr. Kiffin's design, rather than to relate the origin of the Baptist churches in general, and which he must certainly have known were in existence previously to that period.

It must be admitted that there is some obscurity respecting the manner in which the ancient immersion of adults, which appears to have been discontinued, was restored,

when, after the long night of antichristian apostacy, persons were at first baptized on a profession of faith. The very circumstance however of their being called Anabaptists as early as the period of the Reformation, proves that they did, in the opinion of the Pedobaptists, re-baptize, which it is not likely they would do, by pouring or sprinkling, immersion being incontrovertibly the universal practice in the church of England at that time.

It has not been uncommon for the enemies of the Baptists to reproach them with the manner in which this practice was restored. In a work published at the close of the seventeenth century by Mr. John Wall, entitled "Baptism anatomizæd," the writer says, "Their baptism is not from heaven, but will-worship, and so to be abhorred by all Christians; for they received their baptism from one Mr. Smyth who baptized himself; one who was cast out of a church, and endeavoured to deprive the church of Christ of the use of the bible."

To this charge, made with so much asperity, Hercules Collins, a Baptist minister at Wapping, replies with great indignation in a work entitled, "Believers_ baptism from heaven, and of divine institution: Infant baptism from earth, and of human invention:" Published in 1691. Mr. Collins denies that the English Baptists received their baptism from Mr. John Smyth, and says, "It is absolutely untrue, it being well known to some who are yet alive how false this assertion is; and if J.W. will but give a meeting to any of us, and bring whom he please with him, we shall sufficiently shew the falsity of what is asserted by him in this matter, and in many other things which he hath unchristianly asserted."

It is to be regretted that Mr. Collins did not give the account which is here referred to. This defect is however in some measure supplied in a work published by Mr. Edward Hutchinson in 1676, entitled, "A Treatise concerning the covenant and baptism." The dedication is addressed "to the spiritual seed of Abraham, especially those of the *baptized* congregation." He says, "Your beginning in these nations (of late years) was but small; yet when it pleased the Lord to dispel those clouds that overshadowed us, and to scatter some beams of the gospel amongst us, he gave you so great an increase that Sion may say with admiration, Who hath begotten me these?"

"Nor is it less observable, that whereas other reformations have been carried on by the secular arm, and the countenance and allowance of the magistrate, as in Luther_s time by several German princes; the protestant reformation in England by King Edward, Queen Elizabeth, &c.; and the Presbyterian reformation by a parliament, committed of estates, and assembly of divines, besides the favour and assistance of great personages; you have had none of these to take you by the hand; but your progress was against the impetuous current of human opposition, and attended with such external discouragements as bespeak your embracing this despised truth to be an effect of heart-sincerity, void of all mercenary considerations. Yea, how active has the accuser of the brethren been to represent you in such frightful figures, exposing you by that mischievous artifice to popular odium and the lash of the magistracy; insomuch that the name of an Anabaptist was crime enough, which doubtless was a heavy obstacle in the way of many pious souls!

"What our dissenting brethren have to answer on that account, who instead of taking up, have laid stumbling-blocks in the way of reformation, will appear another day. Yet notwithstanding the strenuous oppositions of those great and learned ones, the mighty God of Jacob hath taken you by the hand, and said, Be strong.

"Besides, it has a considerable tendency to the advancement of divine grace, if we consider the way and manner of the reviving of this costly truth. When the professors of these nations had been a long time wearied with the yoke of superstitious ceremonies, traditions of men, and corrupt mixtures in the work and service of God; it pleased the Lord to break those yokes, and by a very strong impulse of his Spirit on the hearts of his people to convince them of the necessity of reformation. Divers pious and very gracious people, having often sought the Lord by fasting and prayer that he would show them the pattern of his house, and the goings out and comings in thereof, *resolved by the grace of God not to receive or practise any piece of positive worship which had not precept nor example from the word of God.* Infant baptism coming of course under consideration, after long search and many debates it was found to have no footing in the scriptures, (the only rule and standard to try doctrines by,) but on the contrary a mere innovation, yea, the profanation of an ordinance of God. And though it was purposed to be laid aside, yet what fears, tremblings, and temptations, did attend them, lest they should be mistaken, considering how many learned and godly men were of an opposite persuasion! How gladly would they have had the rest of their brethren gone along with them! But when there was no hope, they concluded that a christian's faith must not stand in the wisdom of men, and that every one must give an account of himself to God; and so resolved to practise according to their light. The great objection was the want of an Administrator, which as I have heard was removed by sending certain messengers to Holland, whence they were supplied. So that this little cloud of witnesses hath the Lord by his grace so greatly increased, that it is spread over our horizon, though opposed and contradicted by men of all sorts."

Crosby says that this agrees with an account given of the matter in an old manuscript said to be written by Mr. William Kiffin. This relates, that "several sober and pious persons belonging to the congregations of the dissenters about London were convinced that believers were the only proper subjects of baptism, and that it ought to be administered by immersion, or dipping the whole body into the water, in resemblance of a burial and resurrection, according to Rom. 6:4, and Col. 2:12. That they often met together to pray and confer about this matter, and consult what methods they should take to enjoy this ordinance in its primitive purity. That they could not be satisfied about any administrator in England to begin this practice, because, though some in this nation rejected the baptism of infants, yet they had not, as they knew of, revived the ancient custom of immersion. But hearing that some in the Netherlands practised it, they agreed to send over one Mr. Richard Blount, who understood the Dutch language; that he went accordingly, carrying letters of recommendation with him, and was kindly received both by the church there, and by Mr. John Batte their teacher; that on his return he baptized Mr. Samuel Blacklock, a minister, and these two baptized the rest of their company, whose names are in the manuscript to the number of fifty three."

"But the greatest number of the English Baptists, (says Crosby,) and the more judicious, esteemed all this but needless trouble, and what proceeded from the old popish doctrine of right to administer sacraments by an uninterrupted succession, which neither the church of Rome nor the church of England, much less the modern dissenters, could prove to be with them. They affirmed therefore, and practised accordingly, that after a general corruption of baptism, an unbaptized person might warrantably baptize, and so begin a reformation."

These testimonies to a matter of fact by such men as Hutchinson, Collins, and Kiffin, may be safely relied on, as they were all eminent Baptist ministers at a time when they could easily procure information from their aged members concerning it. At the time when Hutchinson and Collins wrote, Mr. Kiffin was still living; and from his perfect knowledge of all things in the denomination almost from the very first, he was doubtless one of the persons from whom they had received their information, and to whom Mr. Collins probably referred, who would give Mr. Wall every necessary information on the subject.

That Mr. Kiffin was well acquainted with this affair, there can be no doubt. He joined Mr. Lathorp's church very soon after the division had taken place in it, when he was about seventeen years of age; and five years afterwards was dismissed from it to Mr. Spilsbury's church, which was founded at Wapping.

It may perhaps be thought that this statement is incompatible with the history of the Baptists already given. What occasion, it may be objected, was there to send out of the kingdom a person to be baptized by immersion, if there were at the same time so many persons in it who had been baptized in the same manner? Might not one of them have been the administrator?

One answer to this objection is, that by violent persecutions almost all the Baptists had been driven out of the kingdom, so that in the beginning of the reign of Charles the first, it would have been a difficult matter to find a minister who had been baptized by immersion. The conjecture of Crosby however is very probable, that if such a one or many such could have been found, yet the old popish doctrine, not yet fully effaced from the mind even of nonconformists, that the right of administering the sacraments descended by uninterrupted succession, would prevent persons desiring baptism from applying to any but a regularly ordained minister, who had been baptized on a profession of faith by a person to be found in the Netherlands, whose baptism they thought, and perhaps with truth, had regularly descended from the Waldensian Christians, and therefore, it is not to be wondered at that they should apply to that quarter.

It is farther to be observed, that the account which Mr. Kiffin gives does not relate to the people who left Mr. Lathorp's church in 1633, and who settled at Wapping under the care of Mr. Spilsbury; but to "many sober and pious people belonging to the congregations of dissenters about London, who sent Mr. Blount to Holland, and were afterwards baptized by him and Mr. Samuel Blacklock, to the number of fifty-three." It is not known at what precise period this happened, but it is evident that these were not Mr.

Spilsbury's people. Edwards, in his Gangraena, speaking of this church, associates with Mr. Blount the names of Emmes and Wrighters, as its ministers, and calls it "one of the first and prime churches of Anabaptists now in these latter times."

Still it may be asked, AS Mr. Helwisse had formed a church in London prior to the year 1615, and had been baptized by Mr. Smyth, how was it that they did not receive baptism from him, or from his successors?

To this it is replied, that the church of which Mr. Helwisse was pastor, was of the General Baptist denomination, and was composed of Arminians, whereas the persons desiring baptism were probably Calvinists, between which denominations there never was much fellowship or religious intercourse, nor is there to the present day. Admitting then that there were ministers of this description, it is not probable that Calvinists would repair to them for an administrator of baptism. But as we are told that the greater number of Baptists, and the more judicious of them, considered all this to be needless trouble, it is highly probable that this account refers to a few people, rather than to the Baptists in general.

These observations are made for the purpose of explaining and reconciling matters of fact which have been generally misstated, and not as an apology for the conduct of our predecessors; since the Baptists of the present day unite with the greater part, and the more judicious of that time, in maintaining, that after a general corruption of baptism, an unbaptized person may warrantably baptize, and so begin a reformation.

During the period of which we have been treating, the church of England was under the government of Archbishop Laud. This prelate, who wanted nothing but the name to constitute him a pope, manifested the most implacable and bigoted spirit towards the dissenters, and all who ventured to expose the pride and oppression of the ruling clergy. The sufferings of Prynne, Burton, and Bastwick, in 1633, are proofs of this assertion. The Star-chamber and High commission exceeded not only all the bounds of law and equity, but even of humanity itself. Those gentlemen being suspected of employing their time in prison in writing against the hierarchy, were cited a second time before the Star-chamber. Though the charges against them then were not proved, and they were not permitted to speak in their defence, yet the following sentence was passed against them: "That Mr. Burton be deprived of his living, and degraded from his ministry (as Prynne and Bastwick had been from their professions of law and medicine;) that each of them be fined five thousand pounds; that they stand in the pillory at Westminster, and have their ears cut off;" and because Mr. Prynne had already lost his ears by sentence of the court, 1633, it was ordered that "the remainder of the stumps should be cut off, and that he should be stigmatized on both cheeks with the letters S.I.;" after which all three were to suffer confinement in the remotest prisons of the kingdom. This sentence was executed upon them June 30, 1637; the hangman father sawing off the remainder of Prynne's ears then cutting them off. After this they were sent to the islands of Scilly, Guernsey, and Jersey, without pen, ink, or paper, or the access of friends: here they continued till released by the Long Parliament.

Mr. Lilburne, an eminent brewer in London, afterwards a colonel in the army, and the person to whom Mr. Kiffin was apprenticed, for refusing to take an oath to answer all interrogatories concerning his importing and publishing seditious libels, was fined five hundred pounds, and to be whipped through the streets from the Fleet to the pillory before Westminster-hall gate, April 8, 1638. While he was in the pillory, he uttered many bold and passionate speeches against the tyranny of the bishops, on which the court of Star-chamber, then sitting, ordered him to be gagged, which was done accordingly; and when carried back to prison, it was ordered that he should be laid alone, with irons on his hands and legs, in the wards of the Fleet, where the basest of the prisoners were put, and that no person should be admitted to see him. Here he continued in a most forlorn and miserable condition till the meeting of the Long Parliament.

During this year many ministers were suspended and shut up in prison. Among these was a Mr. Brewer, a Baptist minister, who lay in prison fourteen years. [Neal, vol. ii. p. 329]

The approaches of Laud towards popery may be discovered from his superstitious conduct in consecrating the church of St. Catherine Cree, which had been lately repaired. On a sabbath morning, the bishop, attended by several of the High commission and some civilians, approaching to the west door of the church, which was shut, and guarded by halberdeers, some who were appointed for that purpose cried with a loud voice, "Open, open, ye everlasting doors, that the king of glory may come in!" Presently the doors being opened, the bishop with some doctors and principal men entered. As soon as they were come within the place, his lordship fell down on his knees, and with eyes lifted up and his arms spread abroad, said, "This place is holy: the ground is holy! In the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, I pronounce it holy!" Then walking up the middle aisle towards the chancel, he took up some of the dust and threw it in the air several times. When he approached near the vail of the communion table, he bowed towards it five or six times; and returning, went round the church with his attendants in procession, saying first the hundredth, and then the nineteenth psalm, as prescribed in the Roman pontifical. He then read several collects, in one of which he prayed God to accept of that beautiful building; and he concluded thus:--"We consecrate this church, and separate it unto thee as holy ground, not to be profaned any more to common use." In another he prayed, "that all who should hereafter be buried within the circuit of this holy and sacred place may rest in their sepulchers in peace, till Christ's coming to judgment, and may then rise to eternal life and happiness." After this the bishop, sitting under a cloth of state in the aisle of the church near the communion table, took a written book in his hand, and pronounced curses upon those who should hereafter profane that holy place by musters of soldiers, or keeping profane law-courts, by carrying burdens through it; and at the end of every curse, he bowed to the east, and said, "Let all the people say amen!" When the curses were ended, which were about twenty, he pronounced a like number of blessings upon all that had any hand in framing and building that beautiful church, and on those who had given or should hereafter give any chalices, plate, ornaments, or other utensils; and at the end of every blessing he bowed to the east, and said, "Let all the people say amen!" After this followed the sermon, and then the sacrament, which the bishop consecrated and administered after the following manner.

As he approached the altar, he made five or six low bows; and coming to the side of it, where the bread and wine were covered, he bowed seven times. Then after reading many prayers, he came near the bread, and gently lifting up the corner of the napkin, beheld it; and immediately letting fall the napkin, he retreated hastily a step or two, and made three low obeisances. His lordship then advanced; and having uncovered the bread, bowed three times as before. Then he laid his hand on the cup which was full of wine, with a cover upon it, which having let go, he stepped back, and bowed three times towards it: he then came near again, and lifting up the cover of the cup, looked into it; and seeing the wine, he let fall the cover again, retired back, and bowed as before. Then the elements were consecrated; and the bishop having first received, gave it to some principal men in their surplices, hoods, and tippets: after this, many prayers being said, the solemnity of the consecration ended.

The pride of the clergy at this time grew to such a pitch, that in the year 1636, a member of the House of Commons said, that "the clergy were so exalted, that a gentleman might not come near the tail of their mules; and that one of them had declared openly, that he hoped to see the day when a clergyman should be as good a man as any upstart jack gentleman in the kingdom."

The church had now reached the summit of its height and splendour, and was determined on crushing all who dissented from the establishment. In the convocation, which was held in 1640, with more pomp than the troublesome situation of the times justified, seventeen canons were published June 30, which treated upon by the archbishops of Canterbury and York, presidents of the convocation for their respective provinces, and the rest of the bishops and clergy of those provinces, and agreed upon by the King's majesty's licence, in their several synods begun at London and York, 1640."

Under the pretext of discouraging popery, but evidently with the design of crushing the dissenters, it was enacted, that "all ecclesiastical persons within their several parishes and jurisdictions shall confer privately with popish recusants; but if private conference prevail not, the church must and shall come to her censures; and to make way for them, such persons shall be presented at the next visitation who come not to church, and refuse to receive the holy eucharist, or who either hear or say mass; and if they remain obstinate after citation, they shall be excommunicated. But if neither conference nor censures prevail, the church shall then complain of them to the civil power, and this sacred synod does earnestly intreat the reverend justices of assize to be careful in executing the laws as they will answer it to God.

"The synod further declares, that the canon abovementioned against papists shall be in full force against all Anabaptists, Brownists, Separatists, and other sectaries, as far as they are applicable." [Neal, vol. ii. p. 348,349]

From this sketch of the history of this period, we may form a tolerable idea of the difficulties which attended the meetings of the Dissenters. It certainly shows also the zeal of those excellent men who were willing to risk all the horrors of excommunication, rather than meet to worship God in a way which they considered agreeable to his holy

word. There is no doubt but many of the Baptists suffered persecution at this time. We have an account of one who was a celebrated preacher amongst them, who was excommunicated for refusing to attend the parish churches, and who doubtless remained obstinate, as this canon denominates those who were honest enough to resist its decrees. This was Samuel Howe, otherwise called Cobbler Howe, who, dying while he was under the sentence of excommunication, was refused Christian burial. The history of this excellent man will be more fully related in the next chapter, which will record great alterations both in church and state. Nor will this appear surprising when the superstition, bigotry, cruelty, and tyranny of the ruling parties are considered. *Oppression*, which Solomon says *makes a wise man mad*, drove the people into rebellion, and produced all its natural and terrible consequences.

VOLUME I.

CHAPTER VI.

A.D. 1640 - 1653

At the period to which we have brought our history, very serious disturbances existed between the king and his parliament. These soon after broke out into a civil war, which continued many years, and ended in the death of the king, the overthrow of the constitution, the subversion of episcopacy, and the establishment of presbytery.

It may reasonably be supposed, that such a state of things would be favourable to the dissemination of those principles by which the different denominations of dissenters were distinguished. Delivered from the oppressive measures of arbitrary monarchs and persecuting bishops, they would hail the dawn of liberty; and not knowing which party would ultimately prevail, would exert themselves while it was in their power.

In 1644, the oppressive and cruel measures of the High commission court and the Star-chamber were terminated by an act of parliament; and thus were destroyed the two chief engines of the late arbitrary proceedings both in church and state, which had been the occasion of ruining the liberties and estates of many religious families.

The zeal and increase of the Baptists at that time, have excited the attention of ecclesiastical historians. Mr. Fuller says, "On Jan. 18, 1641, happened the first fruits of Anabaptistical insolence, when eighty of that sect meeting at a house in St. Saviour's, Southwark, preached that the statute in the 35th of Elizabeth, for the administration of common prayer, was no good law, because made by bishops; that the king cannot make a good law, because not perfectly regenerate, and that he was only to be obeyed in civil matters. Being brought before the lords, they confessed the articles; but no penalty was inflicted on them."

Crosby says, that this is a very imperfect account, and he relates the matter thus: "It was not an Anabaptist, but an Independent congregation, though it is probable there were some Baptists among them."

"They met in Deadman_s place, and their pastor at that time was Mr. Stephen More. Being assembled on the Lord_s day for religious worship, though not with their former secrecy, they were discovered and taken, and committed to the Clink prison, by Sir John Lenthall, marshal of the King_s bench.

"The next morning, six or seven of the men were taken before the house of lords. Fuller says, they were charged with having preached against the King_s supremacy in ecclesiastical matters, and against the statute of the 35th of Elizabeth, which establishes the common prayer, and forbids assembling for religious worship where it is not used.

"The Lords examined them strictly concerning their principles, when they freely acknowledged that they owned no other head of the church but Jesus Christ; that no prince had power to make laws that were binding on the conscience; and that laws made contrary to the laws of God were of no force.

"As things now stood, the lords could not discountenance these principles; and therefore, instead of inflicting any penalty, they treated them with a great deal of respect and civility, and some of the house enquired where the place of their meeting was, and intimated that they would come and hear them. Accordingly three or four of the peers did go to the meeting on the next Lord_s day, to the great surprise and wonder of many.

"The people went on in their usual method, having two sermons; in both of which they treated of those principles for which they had been accused, founding their discourses on the words of our Saviour: *All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth*. After this, they received the Lord_s supper, and then made a collection for the poor, to which the lords contributed liberally with them. At their departure they signified their satisfaction in what they had heard and seen, and their inclination to come again. But this made so much noise, that they durst not venture a second time."

If this was not a Baptist church, there had been a Baptist minister before this time as its pastor. This was the celebrated Samuel Howe, who succeeded Mr. John Canne, the famous author of the marginal notes to the bible. While Mr. Howe was the pastor of the church, they were persecuted beyond measure by the clergy and bishops_ courts. Dying while he lay under sentence of excommunication, Christian burial was denied him, and a constable_s guard secured the parish church of Shoreditch to prevent his being buried there. At length he was buried in Agnes-la-chair. In a work published this year, 1641, entitled "The Brownists_ Synagogue," it is said, "Of these opinions was Howe, that notorious predicant cobbler, whose body was buried in the highway, and his funeral sermon preached by one of his sect in a brewer_s cart." From this it appears that his funeral was public, notwithstanding the violence of the times, and that his people took

this method of pouring contempt upon the impotent rage of his persecutors, whose sentiments concerning Christian burial and consecrated ground they despised; and to prove that this was from principle, and not merely from necessity, many of the members of the church afterwards desired to be buried there also.

Mr. Neal says, That Mr. Howe was a man of learning, and published a small treatise, entitled, "The sufficiency of the Spirit_s teaching." This however does not appear from the work, which is designed to show the insufficiency of human learning to the purposes of religion; and not only so, but that it is dangerous and hurtful. It is certainly written with great strength of genius, though the author was a "cobbler," which appears from the following extract from some recommendatory lines prefixed to the discourse--

"What How? how now? hath How such learning found,
To throw Art_s curious image to the ground?
Cambridge, and Oxford, may their glory now
Veil to a Cobbler, if they know but How."

The following honourable testimony is borne to the character of Mr. Howe by Mr. Roger Williams, of Providence, in New England, in a work entitled, "The Hireling Ministry none of Christ_s," printed in London in the second month, 1552. "Amongst so many instances, (says he) dead and living, to the everlasting praise of Christ Jesus, and of his Holy Spirit, breathing and blessing where he lasteth, I cannot but with honourable testimony remember that eminent christian witness, and prophet of Christ, even that despised and yet beloved Samuel Howe, who being by calling a cobbler, and without human learning, (which yet in its sphere and place he honoured) who yet I say, by searching the holy scriptures, grew so excellent a textuary, or scripture-learned man, that few of those high Rabbies that scorn to mend or make a shoe, could aptly or readily, from the holy scriptures, out-go him. And however (through the oppressions upon some men_s consciences even in life and death, and after death, in respect of burying, as yet unthought and unremedied,) I say, however he was forced to seek a grave or bed in the highway, yet was his life, and death, and burial, (being attended with many hundreds of God_s people) honourable and (how much more on his rising again!) glorious." [page 11,12]

At this period the Baptists began to increase very rapidly. Taking advantage of the liberty which the confusion of the times, if not the disposition of the rulers, gave them, they were not backward in asserting and vindicating their sentiments both by preaching and writing, and also by public disputations. Their courage seems to have greatly provoked their adversaries, who wrote many pamphlets against them. From one of these, published in this year, we have derived some curious information, from which it appears that another Baptist church was formed in Fleet street, by the zeal of Mr. Praise-God Barebone, a person who was afterwards of such celebrity, that he gave the name to one of Oliver Cromwell_s parliaments, which was called by way of contempt, *Barebone_s Parliament*.

It appears from a manuscript which Crosby possessed, that the church of which Mr. Howe was pastor, after his death chose Mr. More, a layman and citizen of London, and a person of considerable property, in whose time the affair mentioned by Fuller took place.

For some cause this church divided by mutual consent, and that just half was with Mr. P. Barebone, and the other half with Mr. Henry Jessey." [Crosby, vol. iii. p. 42] From this circumstance it is probable that this was a Baptist church which admitted of mixed communion; for as Mr. Jessey had not yet been baptized, it is likely the Pedobaptists joined with him, and the Baptists with Mr. P. Barebone. Crosby says, he knew not whether Mr. John Canne was a Baptist or not, though he found his name in a manuscript list among the gentlemen who left the established church to join the Baptists. [Ibid. vol. iii. p. 38] The probability is that he was a Baptist, and that on his leaving England to go to Holland, Mr. Howe succeeded him as the pastor of this church, which Fuller calls a congregation of Anabaptists.

It is a matter of regret that we have not a more particular account of this excellent man. It is likely he never returned from Holland whither he was driven by the severity of the times. Neal says, that "he became pastor of the Brownist congregation at Amsterdam." [Neal, vol. ii. p. 392] In this he was doubtless correct, though mistaken in other matters concerning him. We learn from another writer, that he was much followed at Amsterdam by those puritans who visited Holland at that time for the purposes of trade. "You never," says he, "go to Master Herring_s, (a good old nonconformist) but have gone to Master Canne_s (the separatist) and to his church." He adds, that he had received a letter from a person in Holland, who said, "For their going to the Brownists, and conversing with Master Canne more than us; that is undeniable. What you may of this read, in an Epistle to the Rejoinder in defence of Master Bradshaw against Master Canne, is most true and certain." [Edwards *Answer to Apologet*, Narration, p. 13]

The pamphlet we have referred to is entitled, New preachers, New---" Greene the felt-maker, Spencer the horse-rubber, Quartermine the brewer_s clerk, and some few others, who are mighty sticklers in this new kind of talking trade, which many ignorant coxcombs call preaching. Whereunto is added the last tumult in Fleet-street, raised by the disorderly preachment, pratings, and pratings of Mr. Barebones the leather-seller, and Mr. Greene the felt-maker, on Sunday last the 19th of December."

The tumult alluded to is thus described: "A brief touch in memory of the fiery zeal of Mr. Barebones, a reverend, unlearned leather-seller, who with Mr. Greene the felt-maker, were both taken preaching or prating in a conventicle, amongst a hundred persons; on Sunday, the 19th of December last, 1641."

"After my commendations, Mr. Rawbones (Barebones I should have said), in acknowledgement of your too much troubling yourself, and molesting of others, I have made bold to relate briefly your last Sunday_s afternoon work, lest in time your meritorious pains-taking should be forgotten, (for the which you and your associate Mr. Greene, do well deserve to have your heads in the custody of young Gregory, to make buttons for hempen loops,) you two having the Spirit so full, that you must either vent, or burst, did on the sabbath aforesaid, at your house near Fetter lane end, in Fleet street, at the sign of the Lock and Key, there and then did you and your consort (by turns) unlock most delicate strange doctrine, where were

about thousands of people, of which number the most applauded your preaching, and those that understood any thing derided your ignorant prating. But after four hours long and tedious tatling, the house where you were was beleaguered with multitudes that thought it fit to rouse you out of your blind devotion, so that your walls were battered, your windows all fractions, torn into rattling shivers, and worse the hurly-burly might have been, but that sundry constables came in with strong guards of men to keep the peace, in which conflict your sign was beaten down and unhanged, to make room for the owner to supply the place; all which shows had never been, had Mr. Greene and Mr. Barebones been content (as they should have done) to have gone to their own parish churches. Also on the same day a mad rustic fellow (who is called the Prophet Hunt) did his best to raise the like strife and trouble in St. Sepulchre_s church. Consider and avoid these disorders, good reader."

This is certainly a proof that these new preachers excited great attention, and were so very popular as to draw thousands after them. The tumult was occasioned by the opposition that was raised by "certain lewd fellows of the baser sort." It is not said whether the preachers and a hundred of the people were taken by the constables to preserve them from the fury of the mob, or to bring them to justice. Had the latter been the case, and they had suffered any thing for their conduct, it is highly probable this writer would have mentioned it. It is likely that this affair ended in the same manner as that which Fuller relates, and that as things now stood, the lords could not discountenance such principles.

In the epistle to Mr. Greene, the writer says, "Do not these things come from proud spirits, that he [Mr. Spencer] a horse-keeper, and you a hat-maker, will take upon you to be ambassadors of God, to teach your teachers, and take upon you to be ministers of the gospel in these days of light. Consider, I pray you, that our Lord would not have had the ass (Matt. 21:3.) if he had not stood in need of him. Now the truth is, the church hath no need of such as you, an unlearned self-conceited hat-maker. It is true that in the beginning of Queen Elizabeth_s reign the popish priests and friars being dismissed, there was a scarcity for the present of learned men, and so some tradesmen were permitted to leave their trades, and betake themselves to the ministry; but it was necessity that did then constrain them so to do; but thanks be to God, we have now so much necessity, and therefore this practice of you and your comrades casts an ill aspersion upon our good God, that doth furnish our church plentifully with learned men; and it doth also scandalize our church, as if we stood in need of such as you to preach the gospel.--This you call preaching, or prophesying; and thus as one of them told the lords of the parliament that they were all preachers, for so they practise and exercise themselves as young players do in private, till they be by their brethren judged fit for the pulpit, and then up they go, and like mountebanks play their part.--Mr. Greene, Mr. Greene, leave off these ways; bring home such as you have caused to stray. It is such as you that vent their venom against our godly preachers, and the divine forms of prayers, yea, against all set forms of prayers, all is from Antichrist, but that which you preach is most divine, that comes fresh from the Spirit, the other is an old dead sacrifice, composed (I should have

said killed) so long ago that now it stinks. It is so that in the year 1549, it was compiled by Doctor Cranmer, Doctor Goodricke, Doctor Skip, Doctor Thrilby, Doctor Day, Doctor Holbecke, Doctor Ridley, Doctor Cox, Doctor Tailor, Doctor Haines, Doctor Redman, and Mr. Robinson, Archdeane of Leiester; but what are all these? they are not to be compared to Jolin Greene, a hat-maker, for he thinketh what he blustereth forth upon the sudden is far better than that which these did maturely and deliberately compose."

We have been the more particular in giving extracts from this work, as it gives a tolerably correct idea of the doctrines which the Baptists preached, and the manner in which they conducted their public services. It is not at all wonderful that, when the church had lost its power to persecute, those who still possessed the spirit of persecution should indulge in defamation and ridicule.

There was another quarto pamphlet of six pages, published in 1641, relating chiefly, if not entirely, to the Baptists, which has the following title: "The Brownists_ Synagogue; or a late discovery of their conventicles, assemblies, and places of meeting; where they preach; and the manner of their praying and preaching; with a relation of the names, places, and doctrines of those which do commonly preach. The chief of which are these:-- Greene, the Feltmaker; Marler, the Buttonmaker; Spencer, the Coachman; Rogers, the Glover. Which sect is much increased of late within this city. A kingdom divided cannot stand."--In this work, Greene and Spencer (whom we have mentioned as ministers of a congregation in Crutched Friars) are called the two arch-separatists, and are said to be "accounted as demi-gods, who were here and every where." This silly piece concludes by showing the manner of their assembling, which we extract because it gives some idea of the spirit of the times, and also to prove that the voice of slander, could not attribute any improper conduct to them in their public meetings. "In the house where they meet there is one appointed to keep the door, for the intent to give notice, if there should be any insurrection, warning may be given them. They do not flock together, but come two or three in a company; and all being gathered together, the man appointed to teach, stands in the midst of the room, and his audience gather about him. The man prayeth about the space of half an hour; and part of his prayer is, that those which come thither to scoff and laugh, God would be pleased to turn their hearts, by which means they think to escape undiscovered. His sermon is about the space of an hour, and then doth another stand up to make the text more plain; and at the latter end he entreats them all to go home severally, lest the next meeting they should be interrupted by those which are of the opinion of the wicked. They seem very steadfast in their opinions, and say, rather than turn, they will burn."

In this year was published a small piece in favour of immersion, entitled, "A treatise of Baptism, or dipping; wherein is clearly showed that our Lord Christ ordained dipping, and that sprinkling of children Is not according to Christ_s institution; and also the invalidity of those arguments which are commonly brought to justify that practice." The author of this was Mr. Edward Barber, who was the minister of a congregation of Baptists in London, meeting in the Spittle, Bishopsgate street, where, it is said, "he gathered a numerous congregation, and was the means of convincing many that infant baptism had no foundation in scripture." Edwards, in his *Gangraena*, speaks of a minister

named Bacon, who had been forced to leave Gloucestershire, "but here in London had been entertained in the house of a great man, one Barber, an Anabaptist, about Threadneedle street." [Part i. p. 38]

Though the parliament had decreed, at the abolition of the before-mentioned ecclesiastical courts, "that no courts should be erected with the like powers in future," yet the spirit of persecution was not eradicated from the minds of those in authority. Mr. Barber had no sooner published his piece than he was made to feel the weight of their high displeasure, and was committed to prison for eleven months. The church over which he was pastor, was the first that practised the laying on of hands on baptized believers. He was a learned man, had been a clergyman in the established church, and died before the Restoration.

There was another work printed in London, 1642, entitled, "The vanity of childish baptism; wherein is proved that baptism is dipping, and dipping baptism." The writer signs himself A.R. Who he was we are not informed; but his work is frequently quoted by Dr. Featly, who charges him with saying, "They that have the administration of baptism without dipping, have not the baptism of the new testament." And farther, "The word baptize is derived from *bapto* signifying to dip or dye; and therefore washing or sprinkling is not baptism, but plunging the body, or at least the head in water." Also, "The administration of baptism which hath no express command in scripture, and which overthrows or prevents the administration of baptism which is expressly commanded in scripture, is a mere device of man_s brain, and no baptism of Christ. But the administration of baptism to infants hath no express command in scripture, and it overthrows or prevents the administration of baptism upon disciples or believers, which is expressly commanded: therefore the baptism of infants is a mere device of man_s brain, and no baptism of Christ." Matt. 28:19; Mark 16:16; John 4:1,2; Acts 2:38; 8:39.

On October 17, a famous dispute took place between Dr. Featley and four Baptists somewhere in Southwark, at which were present Sir John Lenthall, and many others. The Doctor published his disputation in 1644, and tells us in his preface that he could hardly dip his pen in any other liquor than that of the juice of gall: it is therefore no wonder that it is so full of bitterness. He calls the Baptists--(1.) An illiterate and sottish sect--(2.) a lying and blasphemous sect--(3.) An impure and carnal sect--(4.) A bloody and cruel sect--(5.) A profane and sacrilegious sect--(6.) Describes the fearful judgements of God inflicted upon the ringleaders of that sect.--This work is entitled, "The Dippers dipt, or the Anabaptists ducked and plunged over head and ears at a disputation in Southwark;" and is dedicated "To the most noble lords, with the honourable knights, citizens and burgesses, now assembled in parliament." It is peculiarly gratifying that the doctor, with all his malignancy, is not able to exhibit any charges against them, except what have been commonly but erroneously alledged against the Baptists in Germany: the disturbances at Munster being no more the effect of the principles of the Baptists, than the riots of London were that of Protestants, or those in Birmingham of Episcopalians.

The doctor speaks very contemptuously of his opponents.--He calls one of them a brewer_s clerk: no doubt this was Mr. Kiffin, who had been an apprentice to the famous

republican John Lilburn, of turbulent memory. He it was to, it is probable, who is called Quartermaine the brewer's clerk, in the pamphlet entitled, *New Preachers, New*.

The dispute commenced, he tells us, by one of the Baptists, saying, "Master doctor, we come to dispute with you at this time, not for contention sake, but to receive satisfaction. We hold that the baptism of infants, cannot be proved lawful by the testimony of scripture, or by apostolical tradition. If therefore you can prove the same either way, we shall be willing to submit to you."

Instead of attempting the proof of what they required the doctor insults them as "Anabaptists, heretics, mechanics, and illiterate men; by whose habit he could judge they were not fit to dispute: besides, they could not dispute from authority, as they knew not the original, nor understood how to argue syllogistically in mood and figure."

The persecuting spirit of Dr. Featley may be discovered from the following paragraph in the epistle to the reader: "This fire (says he), which in the reigns of Queen Elizabeth and King James, and our gracious sovereign [Charles i.] till now was covered in England under the ashes; or if it brake out at any time, by the care of the ecclesiastical and civil magistrates it was soon put out. But of late, since the unhappy distractions which our sins have brought upon us, the temporal sword being otherways employed, and the spiritual locked up fast in the scabbard, this sect among others hath so far presumed upon the patience of the state, that it hath held weekly conventicles, re-baptized hundreds of men and women together in the twilight, in rivulets, and some arms of the Thames, and elsewhere, dipping them over head and ears. It hath printed divers pamphlets in defence of their heresy, yes, and challenged some of our preachers to disputation. Now although my bent hath been always hitherto against the most dangerous enemy of our church and state, the Jesuit, to extinguish such balls of wildfire as they have cast into the bosom of our church; yet seeing this strange fire kindled in the neighbouring parishes, and many Nadabs and Abihus offering it on God's altar, I thought it my duty to cast the water of Siloam upon it to extinguish it."

We had intended to have given some considerable extracts from this work for the information of the readers; but the ridiculous pedantry and scurrilous abuse with which it abounds is so disgusting, that we have chosen rather to refer them to the work itself, which is not yet very scarce, as there were six editions of it printed in six years;--a shocking proof of the vulgarity and illiberality of the age!

It is worthy of remark, that this sect had, he says, thrust out its sting near the place of his residence for "upwards of twenty years." From his residing at Lambeth, it is likely he refers to the church in Southwark mentioned by Fuller, which Crosby says, was constituted about the year 1621; of which Mr. Hubbard, or Herbert, a learned man of episcopal ordination, was the pastor. He was succeeded by Mr. John Canne who, it appears from the records of the church in Broadmead, Bristol, was a Baptist, and the first person who preached the doctrine of believers' baptism in that city.

Perhaps some little allowance may be made for the doctor's ill temper, from the circumstance of his being a prisoner when he wrote it. Being a member of the assembly of Divines, and having held a correspondence with the king at Oxford, he was sent to Lord Petre's house in Aldersgate street as a spy. It so happened that Mr. Henry Denne, a Baptist, was imprisoned there at the same time for preaching against infant baptism, and presuming to re-baptize some persons in Cumbridgeshire.

No sooner was Mr. Denne in his apartment, but the doctor's book was laid before him, which after he had read, considering himself called upon to defend the principles therein opposed, and for which he was then suffering, he sent for the doctor, and offered to dispute the subject with him, which he accepted; but after debating the first argument, he declined the contest, alledging that it was not lawful to dispute without licence from the government; but wished Mr. Denne to write on the subject, engaging himself to defend infant baptism.

Mr. Denne wrote an answer which he published under the title of *Antichrist unmasked*, and dated it from prison, Feb. 22, 1644. He was also answered by Mr. Samuel Richardson, in a work entitled *Brief considerations on Mr. Featley's book*, to neither of which he replied.

One of the pamphlets, which the doctor says had been printed in defence of this heresy, was written by Mr. Francis Cornwell, M.A. This was published in 1643, and was entitled *The vindication of the royal commission of King Jesus*. It was dedicated to the House of Commons, and given away at the doors of the house to several of its members. The doctor calls this "a bold libel, which was offered to hundreds, and in which the brazen-faced author blusheth not to brand all the reformed churches, and the whole Christian world at this day which christen their children, and sign them with the seal of the covenant, with the odious name of the antichristian faction."

In 1645, an ordinance of parliament was passed, enacting, "That no person should be permitted to preach, who is not ordained a minister in this [the Presbyterian] or some other reformed church, and it is earnestly desired that Sir Thomas Fairfax take care that this ordinance be put in execution in the army." Probably the Baptist ministers were much interrupted by this law, as it might be doubted whether (according to the opinion of the Presbyterians) they had been legally ordained. There is no doubt however but this act was passed in consequence of the violent declamations of many of the Presbyterian ministers against tolerating the sectaries, as they called the Baptists and Independents, against whom it appears to have been principally directed.

In order to expose the principles of these misguided men, we shall insert a few extracts from their printed works. In a sermon preached before the House of Commons by Dr. Calamy, Oct. 22, 1644, it is said, "If you do not labour according to your duty and power to suppress the errors and heresies that are spread in the kingdom, all these errors are your errors, and these heresies are your heresies: they are your sins, and God calls for a parliamentary repentance from you for them this day. You are the Anabaptists, you are the Antinomians, and it is you that hold all religions should be tolerated."

In a sermon by Dr. Burgess, addressed to the parliament, April 30, 1645, after admonishing them to beware of all compliances with, and indulgences of, all sorts of sects and schisms then pleaded for, he adds, "And is it persecution and antichristianism to engage all to *unity* and *uniformity*? Doth Paul bid the Philippians beware of the concision? Doth he beseech the Romans to mark those that cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrines they have received, and avoid them? Doth he in writing to the Galatians wise, "I would they were even cut off that trouble you"? And is it such an heinous offence now for the faithful servants of Christ to advise you to the same course?"

Even Mr. Richard Baxter, though more moderate than many, yet, when speaking against the Baptists in his work entitled, *Plain scripture proof of infant church membership and baptism*, says, "The divisions and havock of the church is our calamity: we intended not to dig down the banks or pull up the hedge, and lay all waste and common, when we desired the prelates_ tyranny might cease. My judgment in that much disputed point of liberty or religion, I have always freely made known. I abhor unlimited liberty and toleration of all, and think myself easily able to prove the wickedness of it."

Mr. Prynne, in his Answer to John Goodwin, says, "If the parliament and synod shall by public consent establish a presbyterial church-government as most consonant to God_s word, Independents and all others are bound in conscience to submit unto it, under the pain of obstinacy, singularity, &c."

Mr. Edwards, lecturer of Christ Church, and the famous author of *Gangraena*, tells the magistrates that "they should execute some exemplary punishment upon some of the most notorious sectaries and seducers, and upon the willful abettors of these abominable errors, namely, the printers, dispersers, and licencers, and set themselves withal their hearts to find out ways, to take some course to suppress, hinder, and no longer suffer these things: to put out some declaration against the errors and ways of the sectaries; as their sending emissaries into all parts of the kingdom, to poison the countries; as their sipping of persons in the cold water in winter, whereby persons fall sick, &c.; declaring that they shall be proceeded against as vagrants and rogues that go from country to country; and if any shall fall sick upon their dipping, and die, they shall be indicted upon the statute of killing the king_s subjects, and proceeded against accordingly. It is related of the senate of Zurich, that they made a decree against the Anabaptists, after they had been dealt withal by ten several disputations, and continued still obstinate, that whosoever re-baptized any that had been formerly baptized, he should be cast into the water and drowned. I could wish with all my heart there were a public disputation, even in the point of pedo-baptism and dipping, between some of the Anabaptists and our ministers. But if upon disputation and debate the Anabaptists should be found in an error, (as I am confident they would) that then the parliament should forbid all dipping, and take some severe course with all dippers, as the senate of Zurich did." [*Gangraena*, p. 92-177]

In consequence of the ordinance referred to being published, the Lord Mayor sent his officers to the Baptist meeting in Coleman street on a Lord_s day, being informed that certain laymen preached there. When they came they found two ministers, Mr. Lamb, the

elder or pastor of the church, and a young man whose name is not mentioned, who was a preacher amongst them. The congregation were greatly disturbed; and some of them used rough language to the officers. But Mr. Lamb treated them very civilly, and asked permission to finish the service, giving his word that they would both appear before the Lord Mayor at six o'clock, to answer for what they did.

When they appeared before the Mayor, he demanded by what authority they took upon them to preach, and told them they had transgressed an ordinance of parliament. To which Mr. Lamb replied, he did not think they had violated the law, as they were both called and appointed to the office by as "reformed a church" as any in the world, alluding to the words of the act; but acknowledged they were such as rejected the validity of infant baptism.

His lordship, not being satisfied, bound them over to answer to the charge before a committee of parliament. They were accordingly examined; and not giving satisfactory answers, they were committed to prison, where they were confined for a considerable time; but at length, by the intercession of their friends, they were set at liberty.

This was not the first time Mr. Lamb had been imprisoned. At the instigation of Archbishop Laud he had been brought in chains from Colchester to London, for not conforming to the established church, and for preaching to a separate congregation in that town, which was the place of his nativity. Being brought before the court of Star-chamber, he was charged with having administered the Lord's supper, and requested to confess it, which if he had done, it is expected he would have been banished the kingdom. He, however, neither owned nor denied it, but pleaded that a subject of England was under no obligation to bear witness against himself. He was, however, committed to prison, where he remained a considerable time, during which his wife went often to the Star-chamber court, and in behalf of herself and eight children, earnestly solicited the archbishop to grant her husband his liberty, which it was in his power to procure. But this unjust judge, instead of listening to her importunate solicitations, called to the people about him to take away that troublesome woman. Mr. Lamb was in almost all the gaols in and about London, as he always used to return to his work of preaching as soon as he got free from confinement. He was a zealous and popular preacher, and a man of great courage: he used to say, that a man was not fit to preach, who would not preach for Christ's sake, though he was sure to die for it as soon as he had done.

It was very common for the Baptists at this time to use Old Ford river, near Bromley, in Middlesex, as a baptistery. This place was much frequented for that purpose. Mr. Lamb being employed in baptizing a woman here, her husband, a bitter enemy to the Baptists, brought a great stone under his coat, with an intention, as he afterwards confessed, to have thrown it at Mr. Lamb while he stood in the river. But he was so affected with the prayer before the administration of the ordinance, that he dropped the stone, fell into tears, and was himself the next person baptized. This was probably one of the places to which Dr. Featley alludes, when he says, "they flock in great multitudes to their Jordans, and both sexes enter into the river, and are dipped after their manner, with a kind of spell,

containing the heads of their enormous tenets, and their engaging themselves in their schismatical covenants."

The same year, Mr. Paul Hobson was taken into custody by the governor of Newport Pagnel, for preaching against infant baptism, and reflecting upon the order against laymen_s preaching. After being some time in confinement, Sir Samuel Luke, the governor, sent him to London. Soon after, his case was brought before the committee of examination; but as he had many friends among persons in authority, after being heard, he was immediately discharged, and preached publicly at a meeting-house in Moorfields, to the great confusion of his persecutors.

Among the sufferers for Antipedobaptism at this time, was the pious and learned Hansard Knollys. He had received episcopal ordination from the bishop of Peterborough, but was now pastor of a church in Great St. Helen_s. The circumstances of his imprisonment are related by himself as follow:--

"The committee for plundered ministers sent their warrant to the keeper of Ely-house to apprehend me, and bring me in safe custody before them. They took me out of my house, carried me to Ely-house, and there kept me prisoner several days, without any bail; and at last carried me before the committee, who asked me several questions, to which I gave them sober and direct answers. Among others, the chairman, Mr. White, asked me who gave me authority to preach. I told him the Lord Jesus Christ. He then asked me whether I were a minister. I answered that I was made a priest by the prelate of Peterborough; but I had renounced that ordination, and did here again renounce the same. They asked me by what authority I preached in Bow church. I told them, after I had refused the desire of the churchwardens three times one day after another, their want of supply and earnestness prevailed with me, and I went up and preached from Isaiah 53; and gave them such an account of that sermon (thirty ministers of the Assembly of Divines so called being present) that they could not gainsay, but bade me withdraw, and said nothing to me, nor could my jailor take any charge of me; for the committee had called for him, and threatened to turn him out of his place for keeping me prisoner so many days. So I went away without any blame, or paying my fees."

Though Mr. Knollys was dismissed by this committee, yet he tells us that he was soon after brought before the committee of examination, "being accused to them (says he) that I had caused great disturbance to ministers and people in Suffolk; which I gave so good and satisfactory an account of to them, that upon their report thereof to the House of Commons, they ordered that I might preach in any part of Suffolk when the minister of the place did not preach; which was all I got for sixty pounds, which that trouble cost me to clear my innocence and the honour of the gospel." This circumstance is mentioned by Whitelocke; and it seems as if Mr. Kiffin was included in this prosecution, the following order appearing on the records of the house in 1648:--"Ordered that Mr. Kiffin and Mr.

Knollys be permitted to preach in any part of Suffolk, at the petition of the Ipswich men." [Whitelocke_s Memorials, p. 363.]

As this excellent man_s history illustrates the spirit of those times, we shall present the reader with another extract.--"The sixty pounds expense (he says) I put upon Christ_s score, for whose gospel, and preaching Jesus Christ upon that text, (Col. 3:11.) *But Christ is all and in all*, I was stoned out of the pulpit, and prosecuted at a privy sessions, and fetched out of the country sixty miles to London, and was constrained to bring up four or five witnesses of good report and credit, to prove and vindicate myself from false accusations." [Life of Hansard Knollys.]

These instances show what difficulties the Baptist ministers laboured under at this period, and also what are the consequences of government_s interfering with the church of Christ, and making laws for its direction.

But all this opposition and persecution did not prevent the increase of the Baptists, nor the spread of their principles. In a work published by Robert Baille of Glasgow, 1646, entitled, *Anabaptism the true fountain of error*, it is said, "Their number till of late in England was not great, and the most of them were not English, but Dutch strangers; for besides the hand of the state, which ever lay heavy upon them, the labours of their children the Separatists were always great for their reclaiming. But under the shadow of Independency, the Anabaptists have lift up their heads, and increased their number above all the sects in the land.--As for the number of these seven churches which have published their confession of faith, and for their other thirty-nine congregations (for before the penning of that confession this sect was grown into forty-six churches, and that as I take it in and about London) they are a people very fond of religious liberty, and very unwilling to be brought under the bondage of the judgment of any other."

The confession of faith here alluded to was published about two years before by the Particular Baptists. It had been common with their enemies to load them with opprobrious epithets, both from the pulpit and the press: they therefore put forth this confession to clear themselves from the unjust aspersions cast upon them as persons who held many dangerous errors. Several editions of it were printed in 1643, 1644, and 1646, one of which was licenced by authority. The address prefixed to it was--"To the right honourable the lords, knights, citizens, and burgesses, in parliament assembled." It was signed in the name of seven congregations, or churches of Christ, in London; as also by a French congregation of the same judgment. The ministers_ names are:--

Thomas Gunne, John Mabbitt, Benjamin Cockes, Thomas Kilicop, John Spilsbury, Samuel Richardson, Thomas Munden, George Tipping, Paul Hobson, Thomas Goare, William Kiffin, Thomas Patient, Hansard Knollys, Thomas Holmes, Christopher Duret, Denis Le Barbier.

This confession, being put into the hands of many of the members of parliament, produced such an effect, that some of their greatest adversaries, (and even the bitter and

inveterate Doctor Featley,) were obliged to acknowledge, that excepting the articles against infant baptism, it was an orthodox confession.

The following account of it is extracted from Neal: "This confession consisted of fifty-two articles, and is strictly Calvinistical in the doctrinal part, and according to the Independent discipline. It confines the subject of baptism to grown christians, and the mode to dipping. It admits of gifted lay preachers, and acknowledges a due subjection to the civil magistrate in all things lawful, and concludes thus:--_We desire to live as becometh saints, endeavouring in all things to keep a good conscience, and to do to every man, of what judgment soever, as we would they should do unto us; that as our practice is, so it may prove us to be a conscionable, quiet, harmless, people, no way dangerous or troublesome to human society, and to labour with our own hands that we may not be chargeable to any, but have to give to him that needeth, both friend and enemy, accounting it more excellent to give than to receive. Also we confess that we know but in part, and that we are ignorant of many things that we desire and seek to know; and if any shall do us that friendly part to show us from the word of God that which we see not, we shall have cause to be thankful unto God and them. But if any man shall impose upon us any thing that we see not to be commanded by our Lord Jesus Christ, we should in his strength rather embrace all reproaches and tortures of men, to be stripped of all our outward comforts, and if it were possible to die a thousand deaths, rather than do any thing against the truths of God, or against the light of our consciences. And if any shall call any thing we have said *heresy*, then do we with the apostle acknowledge that "after the way they call heresy so worship we the God of our fathers,_ disclaiming all heresies rightly so called, because they are against Christ; and desiring to be stedfast and immoveable, always abounding in obedience to Christ, knowing our labour shall not be in vain in the Lord."

The country at this time was in great confusion, and great difference of sentiment necessarily existed on the subject of government. It is with pleasure therefore we subjoin an extract from this confession, which gives a clear statement of their political sentiments. The forty-eighth article relates to magistracy, of which they say, "A civil magistracy is an ordinance of God, set up by him for the punishment of evil doers, and for the praise of them that do well; and that in all lawful things commanded by them subjection ought to be given by us in the Lord, not only for wrath, but for conscience sake; and that we are to make supplications for kings, and all that are in authority, that under them we may live a quiet and peaceable life, in all godliness and honesty."

To this declaration of their sentiments the following note is appended: "The supreme magistracy of this kingdom we acknowledge to be the king and parliament (now established), freely chosen by the kingdom, and that we are to maintain and defend all civil laws and civil officers made by them, which are for the good of the commonwealth. And we acknowledge with thankfulness that God has made the present king and parliament honourable in throwing down the prelatical hierarchy, because of their tyranny and oppression over us, under which this kingdom long groaned, for which we are ever engaged to bless God, and honour them for the same. And concerning the worship of God, there is but one law-giver, who is able to kill and destroy (James 4:12.) which is

Jesus Christ, who hath given laws and rules sufficient in his word for his worship; and for any to make more, were to charge Christ with want of wisdom or faithfulness, or both, in not making laws enough, or not good enough, for his house; surely it is our wisdom, duty, and privilege to observe Christ's laws only, Psalm 2:6,9,10,12; so it is the magistrate's duty to render the liberty of men's consciences, Eccles. 8:8, (which is the tenderest thing unto all conscientious men, and most dear unto them, and without which all other liberties will not be worth naming, much less enjoying;) and to protect all under them from all wrong, injury, oppression, and molestation; so it is our duty not to be wanting in any thing which is for their honour and comfort, and whatsoever is for the good of the commonwealth wherein we live, it is our duty to do, and we believe it to be our express duty, especially in matters of religion, to be fully persuaded in our minds of the lawfulness of what we do, as knowing that whatsoever is not of faith is sin: and as we cannot do any thing contrary to our understanding and consciences, so neither can we forbear the doing of that which our understanding and consciences bind us to do; and if the magistrate should require us to do otherwise, we are to yield our persons in a passive way to their power, as the saints of old have done, (James 5:4). And thrice happy shall he be that shall lose his life for witnessing (though but for the least tittle,) of the truth of the Lord Jesus Christ. 1 Peter 5; Galatians 5."

The development of their sentiments, which till now they had no opportunity of making known, was the cause of wiping away the reproach which had been cast upon them, and proved to the government that such persons did not deserve the treatment they had generally received: and from this period they were considered by them as worthy of being tolerated in a Christian commonwealth!

It was about this time that Mr. Henry Jessey, who was pastor of an Independent church, embraced the opinions of the Baptists. His eminent piety and learning had recommended him to the notice of some persons in the church of which Mr. Henry Jacob was pastor, founded in 1616, and the first Independent church in London. He was ordained in 1637, and continued a faithful labourer in this part of the Lord's vineyard till his death.

The circumstances which led to the alteration of his sentiments are thus stated. "It happened every now and then that several of his congregation embraced the opinions of the Baptists, and left the church on that account. In 1638, the year after he settled with them, six persons of note espoused those sentiments. In 1641, a much greater number; and in 1643, the controversy was revived again amongst them, and a still greater number left them. Many of these were persons whom Mr. Jessey very much respected both for their piety and solidity of judgment, and the alteration of their sentiments occasioned frequent debates in the congregation about it; so that he was necessarily put upon the study of this controversy. Upon a diligent and impartial examination of the holy scriptures and the writers of antiquity, he saw reason to alter his sentiments; but he did not do it without great deliberation, much prayer, and divers conferences with pious and learned men of a different persuasion.

"His first conviction was about the *manner* of baptizing; for he soon discovered that sprinkling was a modern corruption, brought into use

without any just reason either from scripture or antiquity; and therefore in the year 1642, the church being assembled, he freely declared to them that immersion, or dipping the whole body under water, appeared to him to be the right manner of administering baptism; that this mode was the import of the original word *baptizo*; that it agreed with the examples of baptism recorded in scripture; and that it best represented the spiritual mysteries signified by it, the death and resurrection of Christ, and our dying to sin and rising again to newness of life. And therefore he proposed that in future, baptism should be administered after this manner. Mr. Jessey accordingly, for two or three years after this, baptized children by dipping them in the water."

About the year 1644, the controversy on the subjects of baptism was revived, and several debates were held in the congregation about it. Before Mr. Jessey avowed his sentiments on the side of adult baptism, he had a meeting with Dr. Goodwin, Mr. Philip Nye, Mr. Jeremiah Burroughs, Mr. Walter Cradock, and several others: but obtaining no satisfaction, he was baptized in June 1645, by Mr. Hansard Knollys. We have been the more particular in stating this event on account of Mr. Neal_s having said, when speaking of Mr. Jessey, "Thus a foundation was laid for the first Baptist Church I have met with in England." As he had the manuscripts from which Crosby wrote, it is certainly a proof how little he regarded them, that he could not find any one prior to this.

The assembly of Divines were now sitting in Henry the seventh_s chapel in Westminster, and it was natural to conclude that as a reformation in the church was proposed, the subject of baptism would be discussed. "Mr. John Tombes (says Mr. Palmer) was among the first of the clergy of these times who endeavoured a reformation in the church by purging the worship of God of human inventions. He preached a sermon on the subject, which was afterwards printed by an order of the House of Commons." This exposed him to the rage of the church party; and at the beginning of the civil war in 1641, some of the King_s forces coming into Herfordshire, he was obliged to leave his habitation and the church at Leominster, and remove to Bristol. He soon afterwards fled from Bristol, and with great difficulty arrived in London, Sep. 22, 1643.

Though Mr. Tombes was informed by one of that assembly, that they had appointed a committee to consider the point of infant baptism; yet after waiting many months, he could get no answer, nor even that the subject was debated whether infants should be baptized or not, though great alterations took place among them on the manner in which it should be administered.

His application to the assembly exposed him to their resentment. Being now minister of Frenchurch, attempts were made to prejudice his parishioners against him under the stigma of his being an Anabaptist; and though he never introduced this controversy into the pulpit, yet because he would not baptize infants, his stipend was withheld.

It happened just after this, that the honourable society at the Temple wanted a minister; and some of them who knew Mr. Tombes to be a man of great learning, and an excellent

preacher, solicited the assembly that he might be appointed to that situation. When he applied to the assembly for their approbation of him as a minister, he was told by the examiner, "that there were many of the assembly that had scruples of conscience respecting it, because of his opinion. Also that in New England there was a law made and some proceedings thereupon, against those who denied the baptism of infants; and that here in England, the directory which enjoins the baptizing of infants was published, with the ordinance of parliament to make the not using of it penal; and that many godly, learned, and prudent persons, both of those who differed from him as well as those who agreed with him on this point, earnestly requested the publishing of his papers."

The situation at the Temple was after much difficulty obtained for him, on condition that he would not meddle with the controversy about infant baptism in the pulpit. To this he agreed upon two conditions;--that no one did preach for the baptizing of infants in his pulpit, and that no laws were likely to be enacted to make the denial of infant baptism penal.

He continued in this place about four years, and was then dismissed for publishing his first treatise against infant baptism, which contained his objections against that practice. This had been previously presented to the assembly, as also his *Examen of Mr. Marshall's Sermon on infant baptism*. For publishing this work he was censured as a man of restless spirit, and as one who intended to increase the divisions and confusions of the times, while others re-presented it as a breach of his promise to be silent on this subject.

To clear himself from these aspersions, he published his *Apology* in the year 1646; wherein he stated, that he had received such provocations, that the publishing of his thoughts on infant baptism was necessary, both "from faithfulness to God and charity to men." Of his "Apology, Mr. John Bachiler, who licenced it says, "Having perused this mild apology, I conceive that the ingenuity, learning, and piety therein contained, deserve the press."

We have dwelt the longer on the history of Mr. Tombes in this place, in order to show the spirit of the Assembly of Divines respecting Baptism. It should seem that these presbyterian reformers adopted the practice and sentiments of the Episcopalians in the time of Edward vi., and resolved, "The custom of the church for baptizing young children is both to be commended, and by all means to be retained in the church."

They were however, not so scrupulous respecting the manner of baptism, which they proposed to alter from immersion to either pouring or sprinkling; for it is a curious fact, that when it was put to the vote whether the directory should run thus, "The minister shall take water and sprinkle it, or pour it with his hand on the face or forehead of the child," the opposition to sprinkling was so great that it was carried only by a majority of one, there being twenty four against it, and but twenty five for it. It is said that this was carried entirely by the influence of Dr. Lightfoot, who was very strenuous that sprinkling should be accounted sufficient. [Robinson's History of Baptism, p. 150]

The Assembly of Divines have been very differently represented. Lord Clarendon, who was their sworn enemy, says: "About twenty of them were reverend and worthy persons, and episcopal in their judgment; but as to the remainder, they were but pretenders to divinity. Some were infamous in their lives and conversations, and most of them of very mean parts and learning, if not of scandalous ignorance, and of no other reputation than of malice to the Church of England." Mr. Baxter, on the contrary, who knew them better than his lordship, and whose word may be more safely relied on, says, that "they were men of eminent learning, godliness, ministerial abilities, and fidelity." Those who will read over a list of their names, preserved by Mr. Neal, will be able to judge whose opinion was most correct.

The far greater part of them were Presbyterians, and some of them Independents; "but," says Neal, "there was not one professed Anabaptist in the assembly." The worst trait in their character is the bigotry and illiberality which they manifested towards their dissenting brethren, as the Independents were called, and towards all others who were politely named in the cant of the day, "heretics, schismatics, and Anabaptists." They formed "a committee of accommodation;" but when the Independents offered so far to accommodate themselves to the prejudices of the Presbyterians as to communicate occasionally in their churches, &c. they gave them a flat denial, and were as much resolved to sacrifice conscientious scruples at the shrine of the idol Uniformity, as the papists and episcopalians had been before them. It was no wonder then that the Baptists, who could not bow down to the golden image which they had set up, should be cast into their burning fiery furnace; and we have no doubt but this would have been "heated seven times hotter than it was wont to be heated," had not a power superior to them, doubtless under the direction of the great Head of the church, prevailed: "for," says Neal, "the spirit which these men manifested, proves what a terrible use they would have made of the sword, had they been entrusted with it."

These discussions in the assembly were likely to lead to an examination of the scriptures on the subject of baptism, as these eminent divines professed to make the word of God alone the standard of their decisions. We are therefore not at all surprised to be informed by Neal, that the opinion of the Baptists "began to spread wonderfully out of doors."-- For, though Mr. Baxter published a piece which he entitled, *Plain scripture proof for church membership and infant baptism*, yet many eminent Pedobaptist ministers have acknowledged that neither scriptural precept nor example was to be found to support the practice.

Another cause for the increase of the Baptists was probably the favourable manner in which some eminent writers represented their principles, and the arguments they used to show the parliament the propriety of granting them liberty of conscience.

The right honorable Lord Robert Brook published about this time a treatise on episcopacy, in which he says: "I must confess that I began to think there may be perhaps something more of God in these sects, which they call new schisms, than appears at the first glimpse. I will not, I cannot take upon me, to defend that which men generally call Anabaptism; yet I conceive that sect is two-fold: some of them hold free will, community

of all things, deny magistracy, and refuse to baptize their children: these truly are such heretics or atheists, that I question whether any divine should honour them so much as to dispute with them. There is another sort of them who only deny baptism to their children till they come to years of discretion, and then they baptize them; but in other things they truly agree with the church of England. Truly these men are much to be pitied; and I could heartily wish that before they are stigmatized with the opprobrious brand of schismatics, the truth might be cleared to them; for I conceive, to those that hold we may go no farther than scripture for doctrine or discipline, it may be very easy to err in this point now in hand, as the scripture seems not to have determined this matter.

"The analogy it hath with circumcision in the old law, (says his lordship,) is a fine rational argument to illustrate a point well proved before; but I somewhat doubt whether it be proof enough for that which some would prove by it; since besides the vast difference in the ordinance, the persons to be circumcised are stated by a positive law, so express that it leaves no place for scruple: but it is far otherwise in baptism, when all the designation of persons fit to be partakers, for aught I know, is only such as believe; for this is the qualification which, with exactest search, I find the scripture requires in persons to be baptized, and this it seems to require in all persons. Now how infants can properly be said to believe, I am not yet fully resolved." [Episcopacy, p. 96.]

While religious matters were in a very unsettled state in the nation, Doctor Jeremy Taylor, Bishop of Down and Connor, published a work entitled, *The liberty of prophesying*. In this he shows the unreasonableness of prescribing to others in matters of faith, and the iniquity of persecuting men for difference of sentiment; and says, among other things, "Many things condemned as erroneous have a great probability of truth on their side; at least so much might be said for them as to sway the conscience of many an honest enquirer after truth, and abate the edge of their fury who suppose they are deceived."

To prove his observations, he particularly considers the opinion of the Antipedobaptists, and by stating what might be said for that error as he called it, drew up a very elaborate system of arguments against infant baptism. Doctor Hammond said of this work, that it was the most diligent collection, and the most exact scheme of the arguments against infant baptism which he had seen; and that he had so represented the arguments for and against it, that many thought the Baptists were victorious. [Crosby, v. i. p. 168.]

The great increase of the Baptists seems to have provoked the Presbyterians, who were now the ruling party, to a very high degree; and the same spirit of intolerance which the episcopalians had manifested towards the puritans, was now exhibited by them against all dissenters from what they, who could now prove the divine right of presbytery, were pleased to decree. The whole of their conduct in respect of those who differed from them, shows what Milton said to be true; that "New Presbyterian is but Old Priest WRIT LARGE."

Their spirit of intolerance may be learned from the history of those times, and especially from some acts of the government. On May 26, 1645, the lord mayor, court of aldermen, and common-council, presented a petition to parliament, commonly called *the City Remonstrance*, in which they desired, "that some strict and speedy course might be taken for the suppressing all private and separate congregations; that all Anabaptists, Brownists, heretics, schismatics, blasphemers, and all other sectaries, who conformed not to the public discipline established or to be established by parliament, might be fully declared against, and some effectual course settled for proceeding against such persons; and that no person disaffected to presbyterial government, set forth or to be forth by parliament, might be employed in any place of public trust." [Crosby, v. i. p. 181.]

This remonstrance was supported by the whole Scotch nation, who acted in concert with their English brethren, as appears by a letter of thanks to the lord-mayor, aldermen, and common-council, from the general assembly, dated June 10, 1646, within a month after the delivery of the remonstrance. The letter commends their courageous appearance against sects and sectaries; their firm adherence to the covenant, and their maintaining the Presbyterian government to be *the government of Jesus Christ*! It beseeches them to go on boldly in the work they had begun, till the three kingdoms were united in one faith and worship. At the same time they directed letters to the parliament, beseeching them also in the bowels of Jesus Christ to give to him the glory due to his name, by an immediate establishment of all his ordinances in their full integrity and power, according to the covenant. Nor did they forget to encourage the assembly at Westminster to proceed in their zeal against sectaries, and to stand boldly for the sceptre of Jesus Christ against the encroachments of earthly powers.

"The wise parliament (says Neal) received the lord-mayor and his brethren with marks of great respect and civility; for neither the Scotch nor English Presbyterians were to be disgusted while the prize [the king], for which they had been fighting, was in their hands; but the majority of the commons were displeased both with the remonstrance, and the high manner of enforcing it, as aiming by a united force to establish a sovereign reign and arbitrary power in the church, to which themselves and many of their friends were unwilling to submit: however, they dismissed the petitioners with a promise to take the particulars into consideration." [Neal, v. 3. p. 327.]

The sectaries in the army, as they were called, being alarmed at the approaching storm, procured a counter-petition from the city, with a great number of signatures, "applauding the labours and successes of the parliament in the cause of liberty, and praying them to go on with managing the affairs of the kingdom according to their wisdom, and not to suffer the free-born people of England to be enslaved on any pretence whatever, nor to suffer any set of people to prescribe to them in matters of government or conscience; adding, that the petitioners would stand by them with their lives and fortunes." [Ibid. p. 328] Thus the parliament were embarrassed between the contenders for liberty and those for uniformity. An instance out of many may be produced of the opposition at this time manifested against the Baptists. Mr. Hansard Knollys having written a letter to Mr. John

Dutton of Norwich, in which he had reflected on the intolerance of the Presbyterians, it happened to fall into the hands of some of the committee of Suffolk, who sent it to London, for the inspection of those in power, and it was afterwards published by Edwards, the author of *Gangraena*. As it seems to exhibit the views and feelings of the Baptists in reference to these measures, we shall here insert it.

"Beloved Brother,

"I salute you in the Lord. Your letter I received the last day of the week;; and upon the first day I did salute the brethren in your name, who re-salute you, and pray for you.--The city presbyterians have sent a letter to the synod, dated from Sion College, against any toleration, and they are fasting and praying at Sion College this day about farther contrivings against God_s poor innocent ones; but God will doubtless answer them according to the idol of their own hearts. To-morrow there is a fast kept by both houses, and the synod at Westminster. They say it is to seek God about the establishing of worship according to their covenant.--They have first *vowed*, now they make *inquiry*. God will certainly take the crafty in their own snare, and make the wisdom of the wise foolishness; for he chooseth the foolish things of this world to confound the wise, and weak things to confound the mighty. Salute the brethren that are with you. Farewell.

"Your brother in the faith and fellowship of the gospel, Hansard Knollys.

"London, the 13th day of the 11th month, called January, 1645."

This year also Andrew Wyke was apprehended in the county of Suffolk for preaching and dipping. When he was brought before the committee of the county to be examined about his authority to preach, and the doctrines he held, he refused to give them any account of either, alleging that a freeman of England was not bound to answer any interrogatories, either to accuse himself or others; but if they had ought against him, they should lay their charge, and produce their proofs. This was considered as great obstinacy, and as a high contempt of authority, and therefore he was immediately sent to jail.

We have no account how long Mr. Wyke was imprisoned; but during his confinement a pamphlet was written either by himself or his friends, entitled, *The innocent in prison complaining; or a true relation of the proceedings of the committee of Ipswich and the committee of Bury St. Edmunds in the county of Suffolk, against one Andrew Wyke, a witness of Jesus in the same county, who was committed to prison June 3, 1646*. This work gives a particular account of the proceedings against him, and exclaims bitterly against the committees for their persecuting principles and illegal conduct.

The arguments which this grave assembly used to withhold from others the blessing of Christian liberty, came with a bad grace from men who had as earnestly pleaded for the privilege, while they were smarting under the lash of the prelates. "To comply with this

request (say they) would open a gap for all sects to challenge such a liberty as their due: this liberty is denied by the churches in New England, and we have as great right to deny it as they. This desired forbearance will make a perpetual division in the church, and be a perpetual drawing away from the churches under the rule. Upon the same pretence, those who scruple *infant baptism* may withdraw from their churches, and so separate into another congregation; and so in that some practice may be scrupled, and they separate again. Are these divisions and sub-divisions as lawful as they are infinite? Or must we give that respect to the errors of men_s consciences so as to satisfy their scruples by allowance of this liberty to them? Scruple of conscience is no cause of separation, nor doth it take off causeless separation from being schism, which may arise from errors of conscience as well as carnal and corrupt reason: therefore we conceive the causes of separation must be shewn to be such, *ex natura rei*, as will bear it out; and therefore we say that granting the liberty desired will give a countenance to schism."

Many instances of this spirit might be adduced; but we shall only notice the following. A work was published by the assembled in 1650, entitled, *A vindication of the Presbyterial government and ministry: with an exhortation to all ministers, elders, and people within the province of London, &c. Published by the ministers and elders met together in a provincial assembly. George Walker, moderator; Arthur Jackson and Edmund Calamy, assessors; Roger Drake and Elidad Blackwell, scribes.*

This work contains the following expressions:--"Whatsoever doctrine is contrary to godliness, and opens a door to libertinism and profaneness, you must reject it as soul poison: such is the doctrine of a universal toleration in religion." The ministers in the different parts of the country seem to have been of the same mind. Those in Lancashire published a paper in 1748, called *The harmonious consent of the Lancashire ministers with their brethren in London*; in which they say, "A toleration would be putting a sword into a madman_s hand; a cup of poison into the hand of a child; a letting loose of madmen with firebrands in their hands, and appointing a city of refuge in men_s consciences for the devil to fly to; a laying a stumbling-block before the blind; a proclaiming liberty to the wolves to come into Christ_s fold to prey upon the lambs: neither would it be to provide for tender consciences, but to take away all conscience." [Crosby, v. i. p. 190.]

We turn away with disgust from these intolerant sentiments, and rejoice that the attempt has been made, and that none of the predicted effects have ensued.

It was very common at this time for the enemies of the Baptists to represent the practice of immersion as indecent and dangerous, and to argue that it could not be according to divine authority, because a breach of the sixth commandment, "Thou shalt not kill;" and the divine declaration, "I will have mercy and not sacrifice." Who would have thought that Mr. Richard Baxter could have expressed himself in language like the following: "My sixth argument shall be against the usual manner of their baptizing, as it is by dipping over head in a river, or other cold water. That which is a plain breach of the sixth commandment, *Thou shalt not kill*, is no ordinance of God, but a most heinous sin. But the ordinary practice of baptizing over head and in cold water, as necessary, is a plain

breach of the sixth commandment, therefore it is no ordinance of God, but a heinous sin. And as Mr. Cradock shows in his book of gospel liberty, the magistrate ought to restrain it, to save the lives of his subjects--That this is flat murder, and no better, being ordinarily and generally used, is undeniable to any understanding man--And I know not what trick a covetous landlord can find out to get his tenants to die apace, that he may have new fines and heriots, likelier than to encourage such preachers, that he may get them all to turn Anabaptists. I wish that this device be not it which countenanceth these men: and covetous physicians, methinks, should not be much against them. Catarrhs and obstructions, which are the too great fountains of most mortal diseases in man's body, could scarce have a more notable means to produce them where they are not, or to increase them where they are. Apoplexies, lethargies, palsies, and all other comatous diseases would be promoted by it. So would cephalalgies, hemicranies, phthises, debility of the stomach, crudities, and almost all fevers, dysenteries, diarrhaeas, colics, iliac passions, convulsions, spasms, tremors, and so on. All hepatic, splenetic, and pulmonic persons, and hypochondriacs, would soon have enough of it. In a word, it is good for nothing but to dispatch men out of the world that are burdensome, and to ranken church yards--I conclude, if murder be a sin, then dipping ordinarily over head in England is a sin: and if those who would make it men's religion to murder themselves, and urge it upon their consciences as their duty, are not to be suffered in a commonwealth, any more than highway murderers; then judge how these Anabaptists, that teach the necessity of such dipping, are to be suffered--My seventh argument is also against another wickedness in their manner of baptizing, which is their dipping persons naked, which is very usual with many of them, or next to naked, as is usual with the modestest that I have heard of--If the minister must go into the water with the party--it will certainly tend to his death, though they may scape that go in but once. Would not vain young men come to a baptizing to see the nakedness of maids, and make a mere jest and sport of it?" [Baxter's *Plain Scripture Proof*, p. 434, 437.]

It is with pleasure we give a place to the reflections of the late venerable Abraham Booth on these remarks, which certainly merited severe animadversion, especially as they were published at a time when, as the sequel will show, they were calculated to produce some serious consequences towards those who were in the practice of baptizing by immersion.

"Were this representation just (says Mr. Booth,) we should have no reason to wonder if his following words expressed a fact: _I am still more confirmed that a visible judgment of God doth still follow Anabaptizing wherever it comes._ It was not without reason, I presume, that Mr. Baxter made the following acknowledgement: _I confess my style is naturally keen._ I am a little suspicious also that Dr. Owen had some cause to speak of his writings as follows:--_I verily believe that if a man had nothing else to do, should gather into a heap all the expressions which in his late books, confessions, and apologies, have a lovely aspect towards himself, as to ability, diligence, sincerity, on the one hand; with all those which are full of reproach and contempt towards others, on the other; the view of them could not but a little startle a man of so great modesty, and of such eminency in the mortification of pride, as Mr. Baxter is." Hence we learn

that the Baptists are not the only persons who have felt the weight of Mr. Baxter's hands; so that if a recollection of others having suffered under his keen resentment can afford relief, the poor Baptists may take some comfort, and it is an old saying,

Solamen miseris socios habuisse doloris.

"Besides, there is a precept of Horace which occurs to remembrance, and is of use in the present *exigence*. *Amara lento temperet risu*, is the advice to which I refer; and under the influence of this direction, we are led to say, Poor man! He seems to be afflicted with a violent hydrophobia! For he cannot think of any person being immersed in cold water, but he starts, he is convulsed, he is ready to die with fear.--Immersion, you must know, is like Pandora's box, and pregnant with a great part of those diseases which Milton's angel presented to the view of our first father. A compassionate regard therefore to the lives of his fellow-creatures compels Mr. Baxter to solicit the aid of magistrates against this destructive plunging, and to cry out in the spirit of an exclamation once heard in the Jewish temple, *Ye men of Israel, help!* or Baptist ministers will depopulate your country.--Know you not that these plunging teachers are shrewdly suspected of being pensioned by avaricious landlords, to destroy the lives of your liege subjects? Exert your power: apprehend the delinquents: appoint an *Auto da Fe*: let the venal dippers be baptized in blood, and thus put a salutary stop to this pestiferous practice.--What a pity it is that the celebrated *History of Cold Bathing*, by Sir John Floyer, was not published half a century sooner! It might, perhaps, have preserved this good man from a multitude of painful paroxysms occasioned by the thought of immersion in cold water.--Were I seriously (adds Mr. Booth) to put a query to these assertions of Mr. Baxter, it should be with a little variation in the words of David, *What shall be given unto thee, or what shall be done unto thee, thou FALSE pen?* Were the temper which dictated the preceding caricature to receive its just reproof, it might be in the language of Michael, *The Lord rebuke thee.*

"Before I dismiss this extraordinary language of Mr. Baxter (adds Mr. Booth) it is proper to be observed, that the charge of shocking indecency, which he lays with so much confidence against the Baptists of those times, was not suffered by them to pass without animadversion. No, he was challenged to make it good: it was denied, it was confuted by them. With a view to which Dr. Wall says, _The English Antipedobaptists need not have made so great an outcry against Mr. Baxter for his saying that they baptized naked; for if they had, it had been no more than the primitive Christians did._ But surely they had reason to complain of misrepresentations; such misrepresentation as tended to bring the greatest odium upon their sentiment and practice. Besides, however ancient the practice charged upon them was, its antiquity could not have justified their

conduct except it had been derived from divine command, or apostolic example; neither of which appears." [*Pedobap. Exam.* vol. i. p. 263-265.]

When a circumstance is related which took place in the year 1646, it will not be thought that Mr. Booth has treated the misrepresentations of Mr. Baxter with too great severity. That to which we refer is the following. Mr. Samuel Oates, a very popular preacher and great disputant, taking a journey into Essex, preached in several parts of that, and one of the adjoining counties, and baptized great numbers of people, especially about Bocking, Braintree, and Farling. This made the Presbyterians in those parts very uneasy, especially the ministers, who endeavoured to set the magistrates against him, in which they at length succeeded.

The bitter Edwards has printed a letter, sent him, as he says, by a learned and godly minister in Essex, which says, "No magistrate in the country dare meddle with him; for they say they have hunted these out of the country into their dens in London, and imprisoned some, and they are released and sent like decoy-ducks into the country, to fetch in more; so that they go into divers parts of Essex with the greatest confidence and insolency that can be imagined." [*Gangraena*, p. 2,3.]

It happened that among the hundreds whom Mr. Oates had baptized, a young woman, named Anne Martin, died a few weeks after; and this they attributed to her being dipped in cold water. They accordingly prevailed on the magistrates to send him to prison, and put him in irons as a murderer, in order to his trial at the next assizes. He was tried at Chelmsford, and great endeavours were used to bring him in guilty. But many credible witnesses were produced, and among others the mother of the young woman, who all testified that the said Anne Martin was in better health for several days after her baptism than she had been for several years before. The jury, from the evidence produced, pronounced a verdict of not guilty, which it is thought greatly mortified his enemies who were concerned in the prosecution. [Crosby, vol. i. p. 238.]

So great was the enmity against Mr. Oates, that on his going to Dunmow in Essex not long after this, some of the town_s-people dragged him out of the house where he was, and threw him into a river, boasting that they had thoroughly dipped him.

Mr. Henry Denne was apprehended again in June this year, and committed to prison at Spalding in Lincolnshire, for preaching and baptizing by immersion. His chief prosecutors were two justices of the peace. They sent the constable to apprehend him on the Lord_s day morning, with orders that he should keep him in custody to prevent his preaching; for the people resorting so much to him was no small occasion of their taking offence. Upon the hearing his case, there was but one witness of the crime with which he was charged, viz. dipping; as he refused to confess himself guilty.

It will give the reader a better view of the proceedings in those times, to see the two examinations that were taken on this occasion.

"The examination of Anne Jarrat, of Spalding, spinster, June 22, 1646, before Master Thomas Irbie and Master John Harrington, commissioners of the peace.

"This examine saith, on Wednesday last, in the night about eleven or twelve of the clock, Anne Stennet and Anne Smith, the servants of John Mackernesse, did call out this examine to go with them to the little croft, with whom this examine did go; and coming thither, Master Denne and John Mackernesse, and a stranger or two, followed after: and being come to the river side, Master Denne went into the water, and there did baptize Anne Stennet, Anne Smith, Godfrey Roote, and John Sowter in this examine_s presence. Anne Jarrat, (w) her mark."

"June 21, 1646. Lincolne Holland, Henry Denne, of Caxton in the county of Cambridge, examined before John Harrington and Thomas Irby, esquires, two of his majesty_s justices of the peace.

"This examine saith, that he liveth at Caxton aftersaid, but doth exercise at Elsly within a mile of his own house; and saith that he took orders about sixteen years since from the bishop of St. Davis_s; and that on Monday last he came to Spalding, being invited thither by John Mackernesse to come to his house. And that he hath exercised his gifts about four times in several places in Spalding; viz. at the house of John Mackernesse and Mr. Enston.--As for baptizing any, he doth not confess. John Harrington."

Though this zealous magistrate spoke of committing Mr. Denne to Lincoln gaol, yet it does not appear that he carried his threat into execution. Had this been the case, it is likely Edwards, who relates this affair of his examination, would have commended him for his zeal in punishing such an evil doer; who in his opinion, and in Mr. Baxter_s, was a breaker of the sixth commandment.

Some very severe ordinances were passed by this parliament, which were aimed at all dissenters, especially ministers: and had the spirit of the times permitted them to be carried into effect, there is no doubt but great numbers would have severely suffered from their operation.

It is a little extraordinary that in the next year, 1647, considerable favour was manifested towards the Baptists.--Perhaps it arose from the policy of Cromwell, wishing to check the overgrown power of the Presbyterians, or from some of his officers and other persons of considerable influence embracing their sentiments, and using their interest in their behalf.

In a declaration of the Lords and Commons, published March 4, 1647, it is said, "The name of Anabaptism hath indeed contracted much odium by reason of the extravagant opinions of some o f that name in Germany, tending to the disturbance of the government, and the peace of all states, which opinions and practices we abhor and detest. But for their opinion against the baptism of infants, it is only a difference about a

circumstance of time in the administration of an ordinance, wherein in former ages, as well as in this, learned men have differed both in opinion and practice.--And though we could wish that all men would satisfy themselves, and join with us in our judgment and practice in this point; yet herein we hold it fit that men should be convinced by the word of God, with great gentleness and reason, and not beaten out of it by force and violence." [Crosby, vol. i. p. 196.]

This declaration discovered much of a true Christian spirit; and happy would it have been if all government had always acted on such principles. But it is lamentable to observe, that the very next year, a more severe law was passed than any that had been made in England since the Reformation. It bore date May 2, 1648, and was entitled, An ordinance of the Lords and Commons assembled in Parliament, for the punishment of blasphemies and heresies. One article was, "Whosoever shall say that the baptism of infants is unlawful, or that such baptism is void, and that such persons ought to be baptized again, and in pursuance thereof shall baptize any person formerly baptized; or shall say the church government by presbytery is antichristian or unlawful, shall upon conviction by the oath of two witnesses, or by his own confession, be ordered to renounce his said error in the public congregation of the parish where the offence was committed, and in case of refusal, he shall be committed to prison till he find sureties that he shall not publish or maintain the said error any more." [Crosby, vol. i. p. 203.]

It is likely that the death of the king in this year, and the confusion which resulted from it, might prevent this cruel and shameful ordinance from being carried into effect, as we do not hear that any were prosecuted upon it.

From Whitlocke we learn, that the parliament after this event were so intent on religion, that they devoted Friday in every week to devise ways and means for promoting it.--Their attention appears to have been particularly directed to Wales, where the people were so destitute of the means of religious knowledge that they had neither bibles nor catechisms. Their clergymen were ignorant and idle, so that they had scarcely a sermon from one quarter of a year to another, nor was there a sufficient maintenance for such as were capable of instructing them. The parliament taking their case into consideration, passed an act, February 22, 1649, "for the better propagation and preaching of the gospel in Wales, for the ejecting of scandalous ministers and schoolmasters, and redress of some grievances, to continue in force three years." [Neal, vol. iv. p. 15.] The principal amongst the commissioners appointed was Mr. Vavasor Powell, a very zealous and laborious minister of the Baptist denomination. The good effects of their regulations were soon discovered; "for," says Mr. Whitlocke, speaking of the year 1652, "by this time there were a hundred and fifty good preachers in the thirteen Welsh counties, most of whom preached three or four times a week; they were placed in every market town; and in most great towns two schoolmasters, able, learned, and university men; the tythes were all employed to the uses directed by act of parliament; that is, to the maintenance of godly ministers, to the payment of taxes and officers, to schoolmasters, and the fifths to the wives and children of the ejected clergy." [Whitlocke's *Memorial*, p. 518.]

This account of Whitlocke_s is valuable, as it serves to contradict what is asserted by Mr. Baxter respecting this transaction. Speaking of the Little Parliament, or what was called Barebone_s Parliament, he says, "This conventicle made an act that magistrates should marry people instead of ministers, and then they came to the business of tythes and ministers. Before this, Harrison, being authorized thereto, had at once put down all the parish ministers in Wales, because that most of them were ignorant and scandalous, and had set up a few itinerant preachers in their stead, who were for number incompetent to so great a change, there being but one to many of those wide parishes. So that the people having a sermon but once in so many weeks, and nothing else in the mean time, were ready to turn Papists or any thing else. And this is the plight which the Anabaptists and other sectaries would have brought the whole land to. And all was with this design, that the people might not be tempted to think the parish churches to be true churches, or infant baptism true baptism, or themselves true Christians; but might be convinced that they must be made Christians and churches in the way of the Baptists and separatists. Hereupon, Harrison became the head of the Anabaptists and sectaries, and Cromwell now began to design the heading of a soberer party that were for learning and ministry, while yet he was the equal Protector of all. At length it was put to the vote in this parliament, whether all the parish ministers in England should at once be put down or not.--And it was but accidentally carried in the negative by two voices. And it was taken for granted that tythes and universities would next be voted down; and now Cromwell must be their saviour, or they must perish." [Baxter_s *Life and Times*, p. 67,68.]

Mr. Baxter supposed that Cromwell hurried on these measures to accomplish the design he had formed of obtaining the supreme power. This event certainly succeeded them; but whether it was occasioned by them, it is difficult to say. Respecting the conduct of this parliament, Mr. Neal observes, that nothing which Mr. Baxter charges them with appears in their acts. "When (says he) the city of London petitioned that more learned and approved ministers might be sent into the country to preach the gospel; that their settled maintenance by law might be confirmed, and their just properties preserved, and that the universities might be zealously countenanced and encouraged; the petitioners had the thanks of that house; and the committee gave it as their opinion, that commissioners should be sent into the several counties, who should have power to eject scandalous and insufficient ministers, and to settle others in their room.--They were to appoint preaching in all vacant places, that none might have above three miles from a place of public worship. That such as were approved for public ministers should have the maintenance provided by the laws; and that if any scrupled the payment of tythes, the neighbouring justices of peace should settle the value, which the owner of the land should be obliged to pay; but as for the tythes themselves, they were of opinion that the incumbents and impropriators had a right in them, and therefore they could not be taken away till they were satisfied." [Neal, vol. iv. p. 69.]

The act respecting marriages was confirmed by the Protector_s parliament in 1656; so that it is pretty evident this measure was not so despicable as Mr. Baxter represents it.--But it should seem upon the whole that Mr. Neal is right when he says, "They were most of them men of piety, but no great politicians. The acts of this convention (he adds) were of little significance; for when they found the affairs of the nation too intricate, and the

several parties too stubborn to yield to their ordinances, they wisely resigned, and surrendered back their sovereignty into the same hands that gave it them, after they had sat five months and twelve days."

The members of this parliament seem to have thought that the period predicted by Daniel was come, when "the saints of the Most High should take and possess the kingdom for ever and ever." But many events afterwards took place which convinced them that they were sadly mistaken.

From the character and talents of some of those ministers whose names have been mentioned in this chapter as the pastors of the Baptist churches, it will not be necessary to use much argument in order to remove the impression which the gross misrepresentations of Mr. Neal concerning them are likely to make on those who depend upon the accuracy of his statement.

He says, "The advocates of this doctrine [baptism] were for the most part of the meanest of the people; their preachers were generally illiterate, and went about the counties making proselytes of all that would submit to their immersion, without a due regard to the principles of religion on their moral characters." The only reason he assigns for this foul slander is, that Mr. Baxter says, "There are but few of them that had not been the opposers and troublers of faithful ministers; that in this they strengthened the hands of the profane, and that in general, reproach of ministers, faction, pride, and scandalous practices, were fomented in their way."

Let the reader judge, when he has made due allowance for the bitterness of Mr. Baxter towards them, whether even this will justify the conclusion, "that they paid not a due regard to the principles and characters of those whom they baptized?" It should seem that Mr. Neal's conscience reproached him for writing this libel upon the majority of the advocates of this doctrine; for he immediately adds, "But still there were amongst them some learned, and a great many sober and devout Christians, who disallowed of the imprudence of their country friends. The two most learned divines that espoused their cause were Mr. Francis Cornwell, M.A. of Emmanuel College, and Mr. John Tombes, B.A. educated in the university of Oxford, a person of incomparable parts, well versed in the Greek and Hebrew languages, and a most excellent disputant. He wrote several letters to Mr. Selden, against infant baptism, and published a *Latin Exercitation* upon the same subject, containing several arguments, which he presented to the committee appointed by the assembly to put a stop to the progress of this opinion." [Neal, vol. iii. p. 162, 163.]

This eulogium on Mr. Cornwell and Mr. Tombes appears to be designed as a balsam for the wound which he had inflicted. But why did he not tell all the truth respecting Mr. Baxter's opinion?—"And for the Anabaptists themselves, (says he,) though I have written and said so much against them; as I found that most of them were persons of zeal in religion, so many of them were sober and godly people, and differed from others but in the point of infant baptism, or at most in the point of predestination and free-will, and perseverance." [Crosby, vol. iii. Pref. p. 55.] Had Mr. Neal a knowledge of this testimony of Mr. Baxter to the character of *many* of them being sober and godly people, and *most* of

them persons of zeal in religion? Surely if he had, he would either have been prevented from dealing in such illiberal censures; or if he had made use of such provoking language, he would have taken an opportunity to have retracted his declarations, like as Mr. Baxter had done in his piece on confirmation. "Upon a review of my arguments (says he) with Mr. Tombes upon the controversy about infant baptism, I find I have used too many provoking words, for which I am heartily sorry, and desire pardon both of God and him." [Ibid.]

The ingenuousness of this acknowledgment is so creditable to Mr. Baxter's piety, that it compels us to forgive him the injury he has done us in furnishing Mr. Neal with matter for his slander. However, if he had made no such acknowledgement, we have no doubt that all impartial persons who know any thing of the character of Kiffin, Knollys, Jessey, and many others who united with them on a conviction of the truth of their sentiments at a very early period, and were the principal persons by whom their numbers were increased, would have been satisfied that he had defamed them; especially when they recollected that they were greatly opposed by the government and the assembly, and were "THE SECT EVERY WHERE SPOKEN AGAINST."

Before we close this chapter we shall notice some events which transpired at this period, which will give the reader a view of the sentiments of the Baptists on the important subject of liberty of conscience. We shall introduce the subject by referring to a letter that was published in England in 1652, giving an account of the sufferings of the Baptists in America, particularly of a Mr. Obadiah Holmes, an Englishman, who, for presuming to baptize a person in the Massachusetts colony, was apprehended, imprisoned, and fined; and on refusing to pay the fine was severely flogged. This letter was addressed, "Unto the well beloved John Spilsbury, William Kiffin, and to the rest that in London stand fast in the faith, and continue to walk stedfastly in that order of the gospel which was once delivered unto the saints by Jesus Christ, Obadiah Holmes, an unworthy witness that Jesus is the Lord, and of late a prisoner for Jesus' sake at Boston."

Before we give the letter it may be proper to glance at the circumstances of this disgraceful affair.

Mr. John Clarke, and Mr. Obadiah Holmes, who is said to have been descended from a good family in England, and another brother, went from Rhode Island to visit a brother at Lynn beyond Boston, July 15, 1651, and held worship with him the next day being Lord's day. But Mr. Clarke could not get through his first sermon before he and his friends were seized by an officer, and carried to a tavern, and to the parish worship in the afternoon. At the close of the service Mr. Clarke spoke a few words, and then a magistrate sent them into confinement, and the next day to Boston prison. On July 31, they were tried before the court of assistants, by whom Clarke was fined twenty pounds, Holmes thirty, and John Crandal five. When Judge Endicot gave this sentence against them, he said--"You go up and down, and secretly insinuate things into those that are weak, but you cannot maintain it before our ministers; you may try and dispute with them." Upon this Mr. Clarke sent a letter from the prison to the court, offering to dispute upon his principles with any of their ministers; but his offer was not accepted. He was

however, with Crandal released from prison, and desired to depart out of the colony as soon as possible. But the magistrates determined to make an example of Mr. Holmes, and after keeping him in prison till September, he was brought out to be punished in Boston.-- Two magistrates, named Norvel and Flint, were present to see the sentence properly executed. This affair will be best related by an extract from the above mentioned printed letter.

Mr. Holmes says--"I desired to speak a few words, but Mr. Norvel answered, It is not time now to speak: whereupon I took leave, and said, Men, brethren, fathers, and countrymen, I beseech you to give me leave to speak a few words, and the rather because here are many spectators to see me punished, and I am to seal with my blood, if God give me strength, that which I hold and practice in reference to the word of God, and the testimony of Jesus. That which I have to say in brief is this, although I am no disputant, yet seeing I am to seal with my blood what I hold, I am ready to defend by the word, and to dispute that point with any that shall come forth to withstand it. Mr. Norvel answered, now was no time to dispute: then said I, I desire to give an account of the faith and order which I hold; and this I desired three times; but in comes Mr. Flint, and saith to the executioner, Fellow, do thine office; for this fellow would but make a long speech to delude the people: so I being resolved to speak, told the people, That which I am to suffer for is the word of God, and testimony of Jesus Christ.--No, saith Mr. Norvel, it is for your errors and going about to deceive the people. To which I replied, Not for errors, for in all the time of my imprisonment, wherein I was left alone, my brethren being gone, which of all your ministers came to convince me of error? And when upon the governor_s words a motion was made for a public dispute, and often renewed upon fair terms, and desired by hundreds, what was the reason it was not granted? Mr. Nowel told me, it was his fault that went away and would not dispute, but that the writings will clear at large. Still Mr. Flint calls the man to do his office; so before and in the time of his pulling off my clothes I continued speaking; telling them that I had so learned, that for all Boston I would not give my body into their hands thus to be bruised upon another account, yet upon this I would not give the hundredth part of a *wampum peague* (the sixth part of a penny) to free it out of their hands; and that I made as much conscience of unbuttoning one button, as I did of paying thirty pounds in reference thereunto. I told them moreover, that the Lord having manifested his love towards me, in giving me repentance towards God and faith in Christ, and so to be baptized in water by a messenger of Jesus, in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, wherein I have fellowship with him in his death, burial, and resurrection, I am now come to be baptized in afflictions by your hands, that so I may have furtehr fellowship with my Lord, and am not ashamed of his sufferings, for by his stripes am I healed. And as the man began to lay the strokes on my back, I said to the people, though my flesh should fail, and my spirit should fail, yet God would not fail; so it pleased the Lord to come in and to fill my heart and tongue as a vessel full, and with an audible voice I broke forth, praying the Lord not to lay this sin to their charge, and telling the people that now I found he did not fail me, and therefore now I should trust him for ever who failed me not; for in truth as the strokes fell upon me, I had such a spiritual manifestation of God_s presence as I never had before, and the outward pain was so removed from me that I could well bear it, yea, and in a manner felt it not, although it was grievous, as the spectators said, the man striking with all his strength, spitting in his

hand three times, with a three-corded whip, giving me therewith thirty strokes. When he had loosed me from the post, having joyfulness in my heart and cheerfulness in my countenance, as the spectators observed, I told the magistrates, You have struck me with roses; and said moreover, although the Lord had made it easy to me, yet I pray God it may not be laid to your charge.

"After this many came to me, rejoicing to see the power of God manifested in weak flesh; but sinful flesh takes occasion hereby to bring others into trouble, informs the magistrates hereof, and so two more are apprehended as for contempt of authority; their names are John Nazel and John Spur, who came indeed and did shake me by the hand, but did use no words of reproach or contempt unto any. No man can prove that the first spoke any thing; and for the second, he only said, Blessed be the Lord; yet these two for taking me by the hand, and thus saying, after I had received my punishment, were sentenced to pay forty shillings or to be whipt; but were resolved against paying the fine. Nevertheless, after one or two days imprisonment, one paid John Spur's fine, and he was released; and after six or seven days imprisonment of brother Hazel, even the day when he should have suffered, another paid his, and so he escaped, and the next day went to visit a friend about six miles from Boston, where he fell sick the same day, and without ten days he ended his life. When I was come to the prison, it pleased God to stir up the heart of an old acquaintance of mine, who with much tenderness, like the good Samaritan, poured oil into my wounds, and plastered my sores; but there was presently information given of what was done, and enquiry made who was the surgeon, and it was commonly reported he should be sent for; but what was done I yet know not. Now thus it hath pleased the Father of mercies to dispose of the matter, that my bonds and imprisonment have been no hindrance to the gospel; for before my return, some submitted to the Lord, and were baptized, and divers were put upon the way of enquiry: and now being advised to make my escape by night, because it was reported that there were warrants for me, I departed; and the next day after, while I was on my journey, the constable came to search at the house where I lodged; so I escaped their hands, and by the good hand of my heavenly Father brought home again to my near relations, my wife and eight children, the people of our town and Providence, having taken pains to meet me four miles in the woods, where we rejoiced together in the Lord. Thus I have given you, as briefly as I can, a true relation of things; wherefore, my brethren, rejoice with me in the Lord, and give all glory to him, for he is worthy; to whom be praise for evermore; to whom I commit you, and put up my earnest prayers for you, that by my late experience, who trusted in God and have not been deceived, you may trust in him perfectly: wherefore, my dearly beloved brethren, trust in the Lord, and you shall not be ashamed nor confounded. So I rest, your_s in the bonds of charity, Obadiah Holmes. "

The publishing of this letter in England appears to have produced a powerful sensation on the public mind, and to have excited great disapprobation of this persecuting spirit and conduct manifested by these American Independents. Sir Richard Saltonstall who was an early magistrate in the Massachusetts colony when Boston was first planted, but was now in London, wrote to the ministers of Boston, Mr. Cotton, and Mr. Wilson, and said:--

"Reverend and dear friends, whom I unfeignedly love and respect,

"It doth not a little grieve my spirit to hear what sad things are reported of your tyranny and persecution in New England; that you fine, whip, and imprison men for their consciences. First, you compel those to come into your assemblies as you know will not join with you in worship, and when they shew their dislike thereof, or witness against it, then you stir up you or magistrates to punish them for such (as you conceive) public affronts. Truly, friends, this practice of compelling any in matters of worship to do that whereof they are not fully persuaded, is to make them sin, for so the apostle tells us, Rom. 14:23. and many are made hypocrites thereby, conforming in their outward man for fear of punishment. We pray for you, and wish you prosperity every way; hoping the Lord would have given you so much light and love there, that you might have been eyes to God's people here, and not to practise those courses in a wilderness which you went so far to prevent. These rigid ways have laid you very low in the hearts of the saints. I do assure you I have heard them pray in public assemblies, that the Lord would give you meek and humble spirits, not to strive so much for uniformity, as to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace. When I was in Holland about the beginning of our wars, I remember some Christians there that then had serious thoughts of planting in New England, desired me to write to the governor thereof, to know if those who differ from you in opinion, yet holding the same foundations in religion, as Anabaptists, Seekers, Antinomians, and the like, may be permitted to live among you; to which I received this short answer from your then governor, Mr. Dudley--"God forbid (said he) that our love for the truth should be grown so cold that we should tolerate errors."

The good sense and Christian spirit manifested in this expostulation, one would have thought should have convinced Christians of the impropriety of casting stumblingblocks in their brethren's way, and that they would have acknowledged their faults, and mourned on account of their folly and wickedness; instead of which we find the Reverend. Mr. Cotton, an eminent minister at Boston, justifying their conduct in the following letter, sent as an answer to Sir Richard Saltonstall.

"Honoured and dear Sir,

"My brother Wilson and self do both of us acknowledge your love, as otherwise formerly, so now in the late lines we received from you, that you grieve in spirit to hear daily complaints against us; it springeth from

your compassion for our afflictions therein, wherein we see just cause to desire you may never suffer like injury in yourself, but may find others to compassionate and to condole with you. For when the complaints you hear of are against our tyranny and persecution in finding, whipping, and imprisoning men for their consciences, be pleased to understand we look at such complaints as altogether injurious in respect of ourselves, who had no hand or tongue at all to promote either the coming of the persons you aim at into our assemblies, or their punishment for their carriage there. Righteous judgments will not take up reports, much less reports against the innocent. The cry of the sins of Sodom was great and loud, and reached unto heaven, yet the righteous God (giving us an example what to do in the like cases) he would first go down to see whether their crimes were altogether according to their cry, before he would proceed to judgment. Gen. 17:20,21. And when he did find the truth of the cry, he did not wrap up all alike promiscuously in the judgment, but spared such as he found innocent. We are amongst those (if you knew us better) you would account of (as the matron of Israel spoke of herself,) peaceable in Israel, 2 Sam. 20:19. Yet neither are we so vast in our indulgence of toleration as to think the men you spake of suffered an unjust censure. For one of them, Obadiah Holmes, being an excommunicate person himself out of a church in Plymouth Patent, came into his jurisdiction, and took upon him to baptize, which I think himself will not say he was compelled here to perform. And he was not ignorant that the re-baptizing of an elder person, and that by a private person out of office and under excommunication, are all of them manifest contentious against the order and government of our churches, established we know by God's law, and he knoweth by the laws of the country. And we conceive we may safely appeal to the ingenuity of your own judgment, whether it would be tolerated in any civil state, for a stranger to come and practise contrary to the known principles of the church estate? As for his whipping, it was more voluntarily chosen by him than inflicted on him. His censure by the court was to have paid, as I know, thirty pounds, or else to be whipt; his fine was offered to be paid by friends for him freely; but he chose rather to be whipt; in which case, if his sufferings of stripes was any worship of God at all, surely it could be accounted no better than will-worship. The other, Mr. Clarke, was wiser in that point, and his offence was less, so was his fine less, and himself, as I hear, was contented to have it paid for him, whereupon he was released. The imprisonment of either of them was no detriment. I believe they fared neither of them better at home; and I am sure Holmes had not been so well clad for many years before.

"But be pleased to consider this point a little father.--You think to compel men in matter of worship is to make them sin, according to Rom. 14:23. If the worship be lawful in itself, the magistrate compelling him to come to it, compelleth him not to sin, but the sin is in his will that needs to be compelled to a Christian duty. Josiah compelled all Israel, or which is all

one, made to serve the Lord their God, 2 Chron. 34:33. Yet his act herein was not blamed, but recorded amongst his virtuous actions. For a governor to suffer any within his gates to profane the sabbath, is a sin against the fourth commandment, both in the private householder, and in the magistrate; and if he requires them to present themselves before the Lord, the magistrate sinneth not, nor doth the subject sin so great a sin as if he did refrain to come. But you say it doth but make men hypocrites, to compel men to conform the outward man for fear of punishment. If he did so, yet better be hypocrites than profane persons. Hypocrites give God part of his due, the outward man, but the profane person giveth God neither outward or inward man. Nevertheless, I tell you the truth, we have tolerated in our church some Anabaptists, some Antinomians, and some Seekers, and do so still at this day."

We have happily arrived at the period when arguments are not necessary to prove the absurdity of this reasoning.--It is surprising that Mr. Cotton did not recollect the address of the Apostle John when he said, "Master, we saw one casting out devils in thy name, and we forbad him because he followeth not with us." To which the King of Zion replied, "Forbid him not: for he who is not against us is for us." [Luke 9:49,50.] This severity was not so much the result of their disposition, as of their principles; which, as Sir Richard Saltonstall told them, led them to *strive more for UNIFORMITY than to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace*. UNIFORMITY was the IDOL which they had set up; and while the magistrate was willing to use his sword to compel all to fall down and worship it, they felt no compunction in sacrificing the liberty, the property, the case, or even the lives of their fellow Christians, rather than it should seem *they were so cold in defence of truth as to tolerate error*.

It is an awful historical fact, a fact written in indelible characters with the blood of thousands, that all denominations of Christians who have enforced the necessity of uniformity in religion by the sword of the magistrate, have been all guilty of the dreadful crime of persecuting the followers of Jesus. Regardless of the divine precept, "Learn of me, for I am meek and lowly of heart," they have imitated the worst spirit ever manifested by the apostles of Christ, when they said, "Lord, shall we command fire to come down from heaven and consume them, as Elias did?" [Luke ix. 51.] And they have done this as Christians, thinking to do God service; and professedly out of regard to divine authority. When the magistrate has been on the side of any who held this principle, they have found no difficulty in proving the divine right of their form of church government. Thus the Papists pleaded the divine right of Popery, and the universality of the church of Rome.--The English Reformers, who objected to this, soon pleaded for the divine right of Episcopacy, and the universality of the church of England.--Many of the Puritans, who dissented on account of these sentiments, no sooner overthrew Episcopacy, but they pleaded for the divine right of the Presbytery, and the universality of their provincial assemblies. And the Independents, who had fled to the wilds of America because they would form churches not subject to external control and influence, were found in their turn pleading the divine right of Independency, and the universality of their authority in the province where their churches existed.

The principles we have condemned have long since been laid aside in the government of America. Perhaps this government was the first which did that for religion, which the religion of Jesus Christ claimed from the governments of the world, namely to listen to the sage advice of Gamaliel to the Jews--TO LET IT ALONE. For this it appears they are indebted to a Baptist, Mr. Roger Williams, who left England to settle in America in 1631. He had been a minister in the church of England, but left it because he could not conform to the ceremonies and oaths imposed in the establishment. When he came to Boston, he objected also to the force in religious affairs which they exercised there. For speaking against this conduct he was banished from the Massachusetts colony, and after great difficulties and hardships founded the town of Providence, and obtained a charter for Rhode Island.

While Mr. Williams was in London to procure this charter in 1644, he published a book called "The bloody tenet of persecution for the cause of conscience." This work appeared to Mr. Cotton of Boston of such dangerous tendency that he published an answer to it in 1647, which he called "The bloody tenet washed and made white in the blood of the Lamb." Mr. Williams replied to this in 1652, and entitled it, "The bloody tenet yet more bloody by Mr. Cotton's endeavour to wash it white." The great principle which Mr. Williams contended for was, "Persons may with less sin be forced to marry whom they cannot love, than to worship where they cannot believe;" and he denied that "Christ had appointed the civil sword as a remedy against false teachers." To which Mr. Cotton replied, "It is evident that the civil sword was appointed for a remedy in this case, Deut. 13. And appointed it was by that angel of God's presence, whom God promised to send with his people, as being unwilling to go with them himself, Ex. 33:2,3.--And that angel was Christ, whom they tempted in the wilderness." 1 Cor. 10:9. And therefore it cannot truly be said, that the Lord Jesus never appointed the civil sword for a remedy in such a case; for he did expressly appoint it in the old testament; nor did he ever abrogate it in the new. The reason for the law, which is the life of the law, is of eternal force and equity in all ages, Thou shalt surely kill him, because he hath sought to thrust thee away from the Lord thy God. Deut. 13:9,10. The reason is of moral, that is, of perpetual equity, to put to death any apostate seducing idolator, or heretic, who seeketh to thrust away the souls of God's people from the Lord their God." [Backus's *Hist. of America Abridged*.]

Mr. Williams clearly saw the result of these principles, and in his work he addressed a letter to Governor Endicott, in which he said, "By your principles and conscience, such as you count heretics, blasphemers, and seducers, must be put to death. You cannot be faithful to your principles and conscience without it." About eight years after this Governor Endicott did put to death four persons, and pleaded conscience for the propriety of his conduct. [Backus's *Hist. of America Abridged*.]

Those who would wish to see more on this subject, may find it in Backus's History of the American Baptists; and if we are not deceived the account which is there given of the principles and spirit manifested by Mr. Williams, will prove this important remark of the author, that "he established the first government on earth since the rise of Antichrist, which gave equal liberty, civil and religious, to all men therein." [Ibid.]

We have dwelt the longer on this subject because these principles were so imperfectly understood at this time. The publishing of Mr. Williams's book in England gave great offence to the Presbyterians, who exclaimed against it as full of heresy and blasphemy. But his principles having been tried, and found to be the soundest policy; both England and America should unite in erecting a monument to perpetuate the name of Roger Williams, as the first governor who ever pleaded that liberty of conscience was the birthright of every person, and granted it to those who differed in opinion from himself when he had the power to withhold it.

When it is recollected that so early as the year 1615, the Baptists in England pleaded for liberty of conscience as the right of all Christians, in their work entitled, "Persecution judged and condemned:"--that this appears to have been the uniform sentiment of the denomination at large, and that Mr. Williams was very intimate with them at a very early period, which is evident from the manner in which he speaks of Mr. Samuel Howe of London:--It is highly probable that these principles which rendered him such a blessing in America and the world were first maintained and taught by the English Baptists.

VOLUME I.

CHAPTER VII.

A.D. 1653 - 1660

The government was now altered, and, instead of being in the parliament, was vested in a single person. This was the general, Oliver Cromwell, whose title was to be His Highness, Lord Protector of the Commonwealth of England, Scotland, and Ireland, and of the dominions thereunto belonging.

The Baptists in the army seem to have been apprehensive that he entertained designs against them, as appears from the following letter, which we insert, not because we approve of its spirit, but because it may cast some light upon the history of the times. It was probably written by some of his officers, who were envious at his exaltation, and offended that he had deserted his republican sentiments. It is entitled, *A short discovery of his Highness the Lord Protector's intentions touching the Anabaptists in the army, and all such as are against his reforming things in the church; which was first communicated by a Scotch lord who is called Twidle; but is now come to the ear of the Anabaptists: upon which there are propounded thirty five queries for his highness to answer to his conscience. By a well wisher to the Anabaptists' prosperity, and all the rest of the separatists in England.*

"TO HIS HIGHNESS THE LORD PROTECTOR,

"My Lord,

"There is some intelligence abroad, which I desire to communicate in a private way, lest I become a prey to the malice or envy of the roaring lion.

But to the matter intended, and that is this:--It seems your highness being discoursing with a Scotch lord, who is called the lord Twidle, you were pleased to say that there was something amiss in the church and state, which you would reform as soon as may be. Of those that were amiss in the state, some were done and the rest were doing; and as for those things that were amiss in the church, you hoped to rectify them by degrees, as convenient opportunity presented itself; but before you could do this work, the Anabaptists must be taken out of the army; and this you could not do with sharp corrosive medicines, but it must be done by degrees. From which there are two things observable, 1. The work. 2. The way you intend to do this work.

"First, to the work; and that is church-work. It seems you intend to follow the steps of them that are gone before, which could not be content to meddle with state affairs, and to make laws and statutes, and impose them upon the people as rules of divine worship. And this is the work you intend to be at, under pretence of correcting error, and so to destroy truth.

"But who could have thought, when you made your last speech to Parliament, when your tongue was so sweetly tipt for the liberty of conscience, reproving the parliament for having a finger on their brother's conscience; who could have imagined that then heard you that you would have been so soon at the same trade, unless he had supposed a fountain could have sent forth sweet water and bitter? But,

"Secondly, the way you intend to take to bring about this design, is two-fold. 1. To purge the army of the Anabaptists. 2. To do it by degrees. But, Oliver, is this thy design? And is this the way to be rid of the Anabaptists? And is this the reason, because they hinder the things amiss in the church? I confess they have been enemies to the Presbyterian church government; and so were you at Dunbar in Scotland; or at least you seemed to be so by your words and actions; for you spake as pure independency as any of us all then; and made this an argument why we should fight stoutly; because we had the prayers of the Independents and baptized churches. So highly did you seem to love the Anabaptists then, that you did not only invite them into the army, but entertain them in your family; but it seems the case is altered. But, I pray do not deceive yourself, nor let the priests deceive you; for the Anabaptists are men that will not be shuffled out of their birth-rights, as free born people of England. And have they not filled your towns, your cities, your provinces, your islands, your castles, your navies, your tents, your armies, (except that which went to the West Indies, which prospers so well) your court?--your very council is not free; only we have left your temples for yourself to worship in. So that I believe it will be an hard thing to root them out; although you tell the Scottish lord you will do it by degrees, as he reports.

"May it please you highness seriously to consider what hath been said, and answer these ensuing queries to your own conscience:

"1. Whether you highness had come to the height of honour and greatness you are now come to, if the Anabaptists, so called, had been so much your enemies as they were your friends?

"2. Whether the Anabaptists were ever unfaithful, either to the commonwealth in general, or to your highness in particular? And if not, then what is the reason of your intended dismissal?

"3. Whether the Anabaptists be not as honest now as in the year 1650 and 51, and 52, &c.? And if so, why not as useful now as then?

"4. Whether the Anabaptists are not to be commended for their integrity, which had rather keep faith and a good conscience, although it may lose them their employments, than to keep their employments with the loss of both?

"5. Whether the Anabaptists may not as justly endeavour to eat out the bowels of your government, as your highness may endeavour to eat them out of their employments?

"6. Whether the Anabaptists did not come more justly into their employments in the army, than your highness came into the seat of government?

"7. Whether, if the Anabaptists had the power in their hands, and were as able to cast you out, as you were them, and they did intend it to you as you do to them; whether, I say, your highness would not call them all knaves?

"8. Whether this be fair dealing in the sight of God and men, to pretend a great deal of love to the Anabaptists, as to Major Pack and Mr. Kiffin, and a hundred more that I could name, when at the same time you intend evil against them?

"9. Whether the Anabaptist will not be in a better condition in the day of Christ that keeps his covenant with God and men, than your highness will be if you break with both?

"10. Whether an hundred of the old Anabaptists, such as marched under your command in 48, 49, 50, &c. be not as good as two hundred of your new courtiers, if you were in such a condition as you were at Dunbar in Scotland?

"11. Whether the cause of the army_s defeat in Hispaniola was because there were so many Anabaptists in it? And if so, if that be the only reason why they are so much out of date?

"12. Whether your highness hath not changed your former intention, to have an equal respect to the godly, though different in judgment? And if so, whether it be not from the better to the worse?

"13. Whether your highness_s conscience was not more at peace, and your mind more set upon things above, when you loved the Anabaptists, than it is now, when you hate their principles, or their service, or both?

"14. Whether your highness_s court is not a greater charge to this nation than the Anabaptists in the army? And if so, whether this be the ease which you promised the people?

"15. Whether there be any disproportion betwixt the state of things now, and the state of things in the days of old? And if there be, shew us where it lieth, how, and when?

"16. Whether the monies laid out in the making of the new rivers and ponds at Hampton court, might not have been better bestowed in paying the public faith, or the Anabaptists_ arrears before their dismissal?

"17. Whether it is not convenient for the Anabaptists to provide for their own safety, seeing from you they can expect none?

"18. Whether it will be any more treason to fight for our liberties and civil properties in these days, if they be denied us, than it was to fight for them in the days of the king?

"19. Whether the instrument of government be as the laws of the Medes and Persians that alter not? If so, how is it that Mr. John Biddle is now a prisoner?

"20. Whether your highness may not as well violate the while instrument of government as the 37th and 38th articles? If so, what security have the people for their liberty?

"21. Whether our liberty doth not wholly depend upon your will, and the will of a future protector, seeing the instrument of government is so little useful. If so, whether our condition be not as bad as ever?

"22. Whether your may not as justly suffer all to be put in prison that differ from the church of England, as to suffer Mr. Biddle to be imprisoned?

"23. Whether it will not be more abominable to the Anabaptists, or Independents, or Mr. Biddle, or any other professing faith in God by Jesus Christ, and are not disturbers of the civil peace, nor turn their liberty into licentiousness, to suffer for their consciences under your government, that promised liberty to such, than it was to have suffered under the king, that promised them none?

"24. Whether your highness will not appear to be a dreadful apostate and fearful dissembler, if you suffer persecution to fall upon the Anabaptists, or Independents, or them of Mr. Biddle_s judgment, seeing you promised equal liberty to all?

"25. Whether this will not prove your highness_s ruin, if you join with such a wicked principle to persecute for conscience, or to turn men out of the army for being Anabaptists, or for any such thing as differs from the church of England, seeing God hath confounded all such as have done so?

"26. Whether the old parliament was not turned out for leaving undone that which they ought to have done? And if so, whether those things have been done since?

"27. Whether the little parliament was not turned out for doing that which the other left undone; or taking away of tithes and other grievances? And if so, then

"28. Whether you did not intend your own ends more than you did the nation_s good, in breaking the first parliament, and calling the second, and dissolving them again?

"29. Whether the instrument of government was not preparing eight or nine days before the breaking up of the little parliament? And if so, whether you did not intend their dissolving?

"30. Whether you did not tell a shameful untruth to the last parliament, saying, that you did not know of their dissolving, that is to say the little parliament, till they came to deliver up their power to you?

"31. Whether your highness did not put a slur upon the Lord Lambert, when he should have gone lord-deputy to Ireland, in telling the parliament it savoured too much of a monarchy; and so sent Fleetwood with a lower title?

"32. Whether your highness do not intend to put another slur upon the Lord Lambert, in sending for the lord-deputy to come into England, to make him generalissimo of the armies in England, Scotland, and Ireland?

"33. Whether it is not convenient for the Lord Lambert to consider of those actions, and to have an eye to your proceedings, lest by degrees you eat him out of all, as you intend to do the Anabaptists?

"34. Whether the excessive pride of your family do not call for a speedy judgment from heaven, seeing pride never goeth without a fall?

"35. Whether the six coach-horses did not give your highness a fair warning of some worse thing to follow, if you repent not, seeing God often forewarns before he strikes home?--

THE CONCLUSION.

"My Lord,

"My humble request is, that you will seriously consider of these few lines, although you may dislike the way by which they are communicated, yet let the matter sink deep into your heart; for these things should have met you in another manner, had not your highness cast off all such friendly communication by word of mouth, and the persons too, if they did but tell you plainly their minds. And take heed of casting away old friends for new acquaintance, as Rehoboam did, who forsook the counsel of his good old friends, and consulted with his young courtiers; which caused the ten tribes to revolt from him. [1 Kings 12:8] And it is a deadly sign of a speedy ruin, when a prince or a state casts off the interests of the people of God; as you may see how Joash forsook the people and the house of God, and then his house fell before a few of the Assyrians, and at last his own servants conspired against him, and slew him.

"And therefore, O Cromwell! leave off thy wicked design of casting off the interest of the people of God; and _let my counsel be acceptable to thee; and break off thy sins by righteousness, and thy iniquity by shewing mercy to the poor, and it may be a lengthening out of thy tranquility._ For _it is not strength united with policy, but righteousness accompanied with strength, that must keep alive you interest with God and the people. And when both these die, that is to say righteousness and sincerity, then adieu to thy greatness here, and thy eternal happiness hereafter.

"From him who wishes your happiness so long as you do well.

"Printed for the information of all such as prize the liberty of their consciences, for which so blood has been spilt." [Crosby, vol. iii. p. 231-242.]

The change of government, however, appears to have been, generally speaking, favourable to religious liberty. In the instrument of government we find the following liberal sentiments.

"That the Christian religion contained in the scriptures be held forth and recommended as the public profession of these nations, and that, as soon as may be, a provision less subject to contention, and more certain than the present, be made for the maintenance of ministers, and that till such provision be made, the present maintenance continue.

"That none be compelled to conform to the public religion by penalties or otherwise; but that endeavours be used to win them by sound doctrine, and the example of a good conversation.

"That such as profess faith in God by Jesus Christ, though differing in judgment from the doctrine, worship, and discipline, publicly held forth, shall not be restrained from, but shall be protected in the profession of their faith and exercise of their religion, so as they abuse not this liberty to the civil injury of others, and to the actual disturbance of the public peace on their parts; provided this liberty be not extended to popery or prelacy, or to such as, under a profession of Christ, hold forth and practise licentiousness.

"That all laws, statutes, ordinances, and clauses in any law, statute, or ordinance, to the contrary of the aforesaid liberty, shall be esteemed null and void." [Neal, vol. iv. p. 74.]

It is evident from these principles, which may be considered as the basis of the protector's government, so far as respects ecclesiastical affairs, that it was his wish to make all the religious parties easy. "He indulged the army (says Neal) in their enthusiastic raptures, and sometimes joined in their prayers and sermons. He countenanced the Presbyterians, by assuring them that he would maintain the public ministry, and given them all due encouragement. He supported the Independents, by making them his chaplains, by preferring them to considerable livings in the church and universities, and by joining them in one commission with the Presbyterians, as Triers of all who desired to be admitted to benefices.--But he absolutely forbid the clergy of every denomination to deal in politics, as not belonging to their profession; and when he perceived that the managing Presbyterians took too much upon them, he always found means to mortify them, and would sometimes glory that he had curbed that insolent sect which would suffer none but itself."

Amongst the names of the "Triers" we find three of the Baptist denomination. These were Mr. John Tombes, B.D. Mr. Henry Jessey, and Mr. Daniel Dyke. [Ibid. vol. iv. p. 103.] This nomination was doubtless designed to bring all parties into the parish churches. In a letter to the States General, preserved in Thurloe's state papers, it is said, "It is also firmly agreed that the bishops and the Anabaptists shall be admitted into it, as well as the

Independents and Presbyterians; yet with this proviso, that they shall not dispute one another's principia, but labour to agree in union; and it is believed that the effects thereof will be seen in a short time." [Neal, vol. ii. p. 67.] These principles were acted on respecting the Baptists, as the commissioners agreed to receive them as brethren, and resolved that if any of them applied to them for probation, and appeared in other respects duly qualified, they should not be rejected for holding this opinion.

Though it is probable that some of the Baptist ministers were brought into the proposed establishment, yet many of them disliked these proceedings, and protested against them in a work published in 1654, entitled, A declaration of several of the churches of Christ, and godly people in and about the city of London, concerning the kingly interest of Christ, and the present sufferings of his cause and saints in England. They say--"And the Lord General Cromwell in his letter to the Kirk Assembly from Dunbar saith, _It is worth considering how those ministers take into their hands the instruments of a foolish shepherd, that meddle with worldly politics, or earthly powers, to set up what they call the kingdom of Christ; which indeed is neither it, nor, if it were, would such means be found effectual to that end; and neglect, and not trust to the word of God, and the sword of the Spirit._" [Declar. p. 6.]

This declaration was agreed on by a large assembly, and signed by a great many names, both in London and the country. Of these last they say, that the hundreds out of Kent, and all in the country, were omitted, and that only a hundred and fifty were selected out of the original copy, and published in the name of the rest. Ten of these are said to be "of the church that walks with Mr. Feak, now close prisoner for this cause of Christ at Windsor Castle; seven in the name of the church that walks with Doctor Chamberlain; twenty-five in the name of the whole body that walks with Mr. Rogers, now prisoner for this cause at Lambeth; thirteen, of the church that walks with Mr. Raworth; fourteen, with Mr. Knollys; nine, of the church that walks with Mr. Simpson; twelve of the church that walks with Mr. Jessey; twenty-two, of the church that walks with Mr. Barebone; eighteen, of the church that walks with Lieu. Col. Fenson; and thirteen, of the church that walks with Justice Highland. [Ibid. p. 21]--Ordered by the Assembly the 30th day of the sixth month, (August) 1654."

These churches were composed of those persons who were generally called fifth-monarchy men. They are represented by Neal as "high enthusiasts, who were in expectation of King Jesus, and of a glorious thousand years reign with Christ upon earth." [Thurloe's state papers, vol. i. p. 621.] Bishop Burnet says, "They were for pulling down churches, for discharging tithes, and leaving religion free (as they called it), without either encouragement or restraint. Most of them were for destroying the clergy, and for breaking every thing that looked like a national establishment."

We ought not fully to rely upon this representation, but should consider that it is made by a bishop of the church of England. By leaving religion free, we ought perhaps to understand nothing more than what all consistent dissenters plead for, namely, that there should be no imposition in religion, that every one should be left to liberty of conscience and the right of private judgment; and that Jesus Christ is the only head of his church.

And by destroying the clergy, and breaking up every thing that looked like a national establishment, it is not necessary that external violence to be employed against them should be understood; but only that if these sentiments universally prevailed, the clergy of the church of England would have no hearers, and national establishments would fall for want of support.

It is certain, however, that they objected very much to the governments being settled in a single person: they were of the commonwealth party, and were some of the protector's determined enemies, when they found that, after all the opposition which had been made to monarchy, they were again called upon to acknowledge it, though under a different name.

The chief of these amongst the Baptist ministers were Feak, Simpson, Rogers, and Vavasor Powell. By some intercepted letters in Thurloe's state papers, it appears that they were very violent in their opposition. "The Anabaptists (it is said in one of them) are highly enraged against the protector, insomuch that Vavasor Powell and Feak on Sunday last in Christ-church publicly called him the dissemblingest perjured villain in the world; and desired that if any of his friends were there, they would go and tell him what they said; and withal, that his reign was but short, and that he should be served worse than that great tyrant, the last lord protector was, he being altogether as bad, if not worse, than he." In another it is said--"I know not whether you have formerly heard of the Monday's lecture at Blackfriar's, where three or four of the Anabaptistical men preach constantly with very great bitterness against the present government, but especially against his excellency, calling him the man of sin, the old dragon, and many other scripture ill-names. The chief of them is one Feak, a bold and crafty orator, and of high reputation among them."

The Protector thought it necessary, in order to support his authority, to order these malcontents to be taken into custody. Mr. Powell and Mr. Feak were apprehended December 21, 1653. The writer adds, "I am just now assured, and from one that you may believe, that Harrison, Vavasor Powell, and Mr. Feak have been all this day before his Highness and the council, and that Powell and Feak are this evening sent to prison, and Harrison hath his commission taken from him." [State Papers, vol. i. p. 641.] This was Major General Harrison, who appears to have been at the head of those Baptists who were for a commonwealth, and who disapproved of the parish churches. Mr. Baxter says, "Cromwell connived at his old friend Harrison while he made himself the head of the Anabaptists and fanatics here, till he saw that it would be an acceptable thing to suppress him; and then he doth it easily in a trice, and maketh him contemptible, who but yesterday thought himself not much below him." [Baxter's *Life*, p. 74.]

This discontent spread itself to Ireland. In Thurloe's State Papers it is said--"Upon the first hearing of this, many of the Anabaptists here were much troubled, principally because of the title Lord Protector, as they think this applicable to God alone." In a letter from Henry Cromwell to Secretary Thurloe, dated March 8, 1653, it is said--"All are quiet here, except a few inconsiderable persons of the Anabaptist's judgment, who also are quiet, though not very well contented; but I believe they will receive much

satisfaction from a letter very lately come to their hands from Mr. Kiffin and Mr. Spilsbury, in which they have dealt very homely and plainly with those of that judgment here." [State Papers, vol. ii. p. 149.]

It is likely that those who were dissatisfied with this change in the government were persons in the army.--But of the Baptists in general at that period in Ireland a very honourable character is given in the following letter, dated April 5, 1654, addressed to Secretary Thurloe, which says, "As to the grand affairs in Ireland, especially as it relates to the Anabaptist party, I am confident they are much misconceived in England. Truly I am apt to believe that upon the change of affairs, here was discontent, but very little animosity. Upon the sabbath a congregation may be discovered of which Mr. Patient is pastor." In another, speaking of Mr. Blackwood, it is said--"This man is now fixed with the congregation at Dublin, and Mr. Patient appointed an evangelist, to preach up and down the country." [vol. iii. p. 90.]

Having mentioned the Baptists in Ireland, whose ministers in general had gone from England, we are happy that we are able to introduce some letters which were sent from them in this year, and but a few months after the Protector was proclaimed, which fully develop their characters and principles. In these Mr. Blackwood and Mr. Patient, the excellency of whose characters are well known, appear to be principal persons. With the time of their leaving England for Ireland we are unacquainted; but it is probable by the number of churches at this period in that land of superstition, that they had been settled there for several years.

In order to introduce this, so as to preserve the chain of our history, we must make a digression, and glance at the origin of those churches in Wales with whom they held correspondence.

In 1649, about four years before this time, two persons, Mr. John Miles and Mr. Thomas Proud, who had been brought to the knowledge of the truth in the principality, came to London, that they might obtain clearer views of the doctrines and discipline of the church of Christ. When arrived at London, they attended with a Baptist church meeting at Glazier_s-hall, in Broadstreet, and from thence called the church at the Glass-house.

The elders were Mr. William Consett, and Mr. William Draper. It is very remarkable, and deserves particular notice, that this church immediately before their coming had observed a day of fasting and prayer, to implore "the Lord of the harvest that he would send forth labourers into his harvest;" especially into the dark parts of the land. When these strangers made known their design, they were well received, and continued with them a fortnight, during which it is supposed they were baptized. Returning into their own country, they were made instrumental in gathering a church about Ilston, which it is probable was the first church that admitted none but baptized believers to fellowship; the churches founded prior to this by Messrs. Cradock, Jones, and Powell, being on the plan of mixed communion.

Though we have no intention to give the history of the Welsh Baptists, yet it is necessary to introduce some letters which were sent from the church at the glass-house to the churches at and about Ilston, to throw light on our English history. For these letters we are indebted to the valuable manuscripts of Mr. Joshua Thomas, and published by him in the Welsh language. The first of these was written in 1650, and is as follows:--

"Beloved in the Lord in Christ our Head,

"We salute you, praying daily for you, that God would be pleased to make known his grace to you, so that you may be made able to walk before him in holiness, and without blame all your days. We assure you it is no small joy to us to hear of the goodness of God to you-ward, that now the scriptures again are made good, namely, to those who sit in darkness God hath wonderfully appeared; even to you whose habitations were in dark corners of the earth. The Lord grant that we may acknowledge his goodness in answering prayers, for we dare boldly affirm it to be so, for we have poured out our souls to God, that he would enlighten the dark corners of the land, and that to those who sit in darkness God would arise, and God hath arisen indeed.--We cannot but say that God sent over brother Miles to us; we having prayed that God would give to us some who might give themselves to the work of the Lord in those places where he had work to do; and we cannot but acknowledge it before the Lord, and pray that it may be more than ordinary provocation to us to call upon our own hearts, and upon each other's hearts, to call upon that God who hath stiled himself a God hearing prayer. And now, brethren, we pray and exhort you to walk worthy of the mercies of God, who hath appeared to you; and that you exhort one another daily to walk with God with an upright heart, keeping close to him in all your ways, and to go forward, pressing hard after the mark for the prize of the high calling which is in Christ Jesus. The Lord grant that you may be strengthened against the wiles of that evil and subtle enemy of our salvation, knowing that he and his servants turn themselves into glorious shapes, and make great pretences, speaking swelling words of vanity, endeavouring to beguile souls: but blessed be God, we hope you are not ignorant of his devices.--Time would fail us to tell you how many ways many have been ensnared and fallen; yet praised be his name, many have escaped his snares, even as a bird from the hand of the cunning fowler. So committing you to God and the word of his grace, we take leave, subscribing ourselves,

"Your brethren in the faith and fellowship of Christ, according to the Gospel,

William Consett, Edward Cressett, Joseph Stafford, Edward Roberts, John Harman, Robert Bowes."

There is mention made of another letter from the church at the glass-house to the church at Llanharan, dated the 12th of the eleventh month, 1650. This was signed by William Consett, Sam. Larke, Peter Scutts, Robert Bowes, Robert Doyley, Edward Roberts, T. Harrison, Richard Bartlett, Henry Grigg, Edward Grenn, John Bradg, and Edward Bruit.

Another letter was addressed to the church at the Hay, and signed by several of the above, and by Richard Graves, William Comby, Thomas Carter, Robert Stayner, Peter Row, R. Cherry, Ralph Manwaring, William Haines, and Nathan Allen.

They also sent a letter to the church at Carmarthan, and another about this time to that at Ilston. In this last they made many enquiries after their order and discipline, saying, "We would know of any whether those who have not been by water baptized into Christ have put on Christ in the account of the scripture. 1. Whether baptism by water be not an ordinance of Christ, expressly commanded by him to be practised by saints in the day of the gospel?--2. Whether it be not the duty of every believer to be obedient to every command of Christ in his word?--3. Whether it be not sinful and disorderly for any who profess themselves disciples of Christ to live in the neglect of a plain and positive command?--4. Whether the scripture commands not a withdrawing from every brother that walketh disorderly?--5. Whether Christ be not as faithful in his house as Moses was? and whether Christ_s commands under the gospel be not to be observed with as much care?"

In 1651 the Baptist churches in Wales sent letters by their messenger Mr. John Miles, to the Baptist church in London meeting at Glazier_s-hall. In those letters the churches gave a good account of their comfortable state, being in peace, harmony, many added, &c. The church in London in reply sent them an affectionate letter, advising and confirming them in the truth.

"In this letter I find (says Mr. Thomas) the following paragraph:

"Regarding the distance of your habitations, we advise--If you experience that God hath endowed you with gifts whereby ye may edify one another, and keep up proper order and ministry in the church of Christ; then we judge you may separate into more distinct congregations, provided it be done with mutual consent; and if there be among you those who may, in some measure, take the oversight of you in the Lord. But if not, we believe it will be more for the honour of Christ for you to continue together, and meet every first day, as many as conveniently can, and once in the week to pray and prophecy, (prophesying, says Mr. T. they then called an exhortation or expounding) and when they can for all to meet together to break bread, though that may not be every first day, for undoubtedly God will have mercy and not sacrifice."

This letter was signed by William Consett, William Combey, William Chassey, Samuel Tull, Edward Green, Joseph Stafford, Robert Cherry, Thomas Carter, John Mildmay, &c. [History of the Baptist Association by Joshua Thomas, p. 8.]

It appears that on some occasion both Mr. Draper and Mr. Consett, the pastors of the church at Glazier_s-hall, went to Ireland, and also two other persons mentioned in these letters, Mr. Peter Row and Mr. Edward Roberts.--From this circumstance we account for the intimacy that subsisted between the several churches of England, Ireland, and Wales, mentioned in the correspondence to which we have alluded, and which we now present to our readers.

In 1653, an epistle was sent from Dublin by a member of that church named VERNON, to the churches of London under the care of Messrs. Kiffin, Spilsbury, and others.--The following is a copy:

The Churches of Christ in Ireland, united together, reside in the several places following:-
-

1. DUBLIN--With whom are the brethren, Patient, Law, Vernon, Roberts, Smith, and several others, who walk comfortably together, through grace.
2. WATERFORD--With whom are the brethren, Wade, Row, Boulton, Cawdron, Longdon, with several others: most of them being resident there, we trust, are in a thriving condition in their spiritual state.
3. CLONMELL--With whom are the brethren Charles and Draper, and sometimes Hutchinson and Bullock to assist them. Some other brethren are scattered in several other places in those parts, who are recommended to the care of our friends at Clonmell, who are nearest to them.
4. KILKENNY-- They have the brethren, Blackwood, Caxe, Axtell, Gough, with several others, who we hope also are in a growing condition, and walk orderly.
5. CORK--With whom are the brethren Lamb, Coleman, and several others, who walk orderly together, though in a place of much opposition by such as slight the ways of the Lord; with whom also are in communion some friends at Brand Kingsale, and other parts of the country.
6. LIMERICK--With whom are brethren, Knight, Uzell, Skinner, and some others, who we fear are in a decaying condition, for want of able brethren to strengthen them; brother Knight having been weak, so not able to be much with them.
7. GALLOWAY--Have the brethren, Clarke, Davis, &c. who, we understand, do walk orderly, but have few able among them to edify the body.
8. WEXFORD--And a people lately gathered by brother Blackwood, with whom are the brethren Tomlins, Hussey, Neale, Biggs, &c. who have not much help among them selves, but are sometimes visited by Waterford friends.

9. In the North, near CARRICK FERGUS, are several lately received by brother Reade, who were baptized here by brother Patient, who, we understand, are valuable, but want some able brethren to establish them.

10. KERRY--Where are some friends received lately by brother Dix, Velson, and Browne: and brother Chawbers speaks to them. Of these we have not much experience; but have lately heard by brother Chawbers, that they walk orderly.--We know not of any particular friends scattered abroad in the country, but who are committed to the place of some friends near them, who, we hope, as they are able, will discharge their duty towards them.

N.B. Friends deceased, &c. at the several places and churches before mentioned follow:-- At Waterford, sister Watson, sister Mary Row; at Kilkenny, sister Deare; at Clonmell, brother Brooks; at or near Limerick, brother Brooks, brother Cooper, and brother Rush; several cast out for sin. At Clonmell, brother Dix, Clayton, Price, Thornhill, and Francis; at Kilkenny, brother Fogg, one at Galloway; and some at Liberick, a particular account of whom we have not at present. Sister Sarah Barret, at Dublin, some time servant to brother Patient, is now coming for England. Brother Vernon can particularly inform you of her.

COPY OF A LETTER SENT FROM THE CHURCHES IN IRELAND TO THE BRETHREN IN ENGLAND.

Dear Friends!

We cannot, without much shame, speak of our long silence to you; nor without much grief think of yours to us, which we earnestly desire may be mutually laid to heart by us all, to prevent the like occasion of complaint for the future. Surely it is a needful wholesome word, to exhort one another daily. Heb. 3:13. Had it been more in our hearts, it would have been more in our mouths, in the several opportunities we have had of corresponding together upon more common, but less profitable affairs. Oh! how many packets have passed filled with worldly matters, since we have heard one word from you, or you from us, of the condition, increase, growth or decrease of God's Israel, who were some years since brought low through oppressions, afflictions, and sorrow! His hand has been still stretched forth to set his poor despised ones on high: Yea, God hath done great things for us, for which we ought greatly to rejoice; but how little have we wisely considered of his doings! for which we have meet cause to mourn, but have not observed nor feelingly laid them to heart. How many have been broken, who have been gathered together against Zion, and fallen for her sake! Surely, were we not hardened through the deceitfulness of sin, our hearts would be more awakened, and all that is within us, to bless his holy name, who hath so blasted the wisdom and power of men, when it hath been opposite to the work which our God is carrying on in the earth; which, as we have clearly seen, we have soon

forgotten, through the carnality which we have suffered too much to prevail in our mortal bodies.

Precious friends! let us, in this our day, search and examine our hearts, by the light of the word and spirit of our God; and surely we shall find, that the posture of those poor virgins in Matt. 25 hath been too much ours: For while our bridegroom tarrieth, do we not all slumber and sleep? so that little difference is discerned between the foolish and the wise. Alas! Alas! what means the dull, cold, estranged frame of heart we bear each to the other, as before mentioned? And is it not the like to our God? Doth it not appear by our little zeal for him, and less delight in his ways, with constant complainings, and little sense of our victory? Our leanness, our dryness, our barrenness are now instead of the songs of Sion. Doth not the Lord call aloud to professors, Prepare! Be awake to meet your God, O Israel! Yea, doth he not pronounce woes against them that are at ease in Sion? Doubtless, expecting, that while these turnings, overturnings and changes are in the earth, we should stand upon our watch-tower, enter into our chambers, and be a holy, praying, humble, and praising people: For, surely, now, if ever, we are especially called upon to put on the whole armour of God, that we may be able to stand in this evil day, and having done all to stand. We therefore desire to revive your memory and our own with those known and approved scriptures, Eph. 6:10-17. Beloved brethren and sisters! we, even with tears, beg for you and for ourselves, that all and each of us may in truth of heart be retiredly exercised in recounting and calling to mind what the Lord hath done for our souls and for our bodies, for his people in general, and what he is doing, and what great and precious things he tells us are in his heart, and which he is resolved speedily to accomplish; wherein, and in expectation of which, he calls upon us thus, Isaiah 65:18. Be glad and rejoice for ever in that which I create: for, behold, I create Jerusalem a rejoicing, and her people a joy.--We recommend unto you the preceding and following verses.

Dearly beloved brethren! The Lord engaged our hearts with the rest of the churches of Christ in the faith and order of the gospel in this kingdom, jointly, as one person, to wait upon him by fasting, humiliation, prayer, and supplication, with a sense of our great shortness of, and unsuitableness to what is in the inclosed particulars expressed; which we also tenderly offer, and, as our resolutions, direct and recommend unto you, our fellow-members and followers of the Lamb, our Lord Jesus Christ; being hopefully assured this will be a means of our recovery from a slippery and slothful condition, which hath brought us too much to realize the character in Proverbs 24:30, &c.

Precious friends! The Lord hath given us comfortable hope, that in the prosecution hereof, he will, through his mighty working by his blessed Spirit, prepare us for every condition; yea, if he should bring upon us such

a trial as hath not yet been seen in our days; or should this be the dawning of his blessed day, so much promised, yet too little hoped for: however he will hasten it in his time, Isaiah 60:22--We, for our conveniency, have agreed to keep the first Wednesday in every month, from six to six, which, with other breathing of our hearts, we have committed to the care and trust of our beloved and faithful brother John Vernon, the bearer hereof, who, through the Lord_s blessing, will be suddenly with you, and will also acquaint you with our state and condition. He is in full communion with us. His conversation hath been in zeal and faithfulness; the Lord having put it into the hearts of all his congregations in Ireland to have a more revived correspondence with each other by letters and loving epistles, in which practice we found great advantage, not only by weakening Satan_s suggestions and jealousies, but it hath brought a closer union and knitting of heart; and, which is not an inferior consideration, we have hereby been enabled feelingly and knowingly to present each others wants and conditions before Our God. In the same manner, we shall better enabled to answer our duty towards you, and you towards us, and so bear each others burdens, and fulfil the law of Christ in our very near relation.

We hereby earnestly request the same brotherly correspondence with you and from you; and by your means, with all the rest of the churches of Christ, in ENGLAND, SCOTLAND, and WALES; whom we trust you will provoke to the same things, which we hope may be mutually obtained once in three months. You may remember our earnest request to you some time since, which request was made once and again, to have a perfect account of the churches of Christ owned in communion with you, in the places before mentioned. Had that desire been answered, it might have prevented our long sad silence, and the danger of receiving or refusing such as ought, or ought not to enjoy communion. WE offer one request more unto you, if it hath not been lately practised; which is, that you would send two or more faithful brethren, well acquainted with the discipline and order of the Lord_s house; and that may be able to speak seasonable words, suiting the necessities of his people; to visit, comfort, and confirm all the flock of Our Lord Jesus, that are, or have given up their names to be, under his rule and government, in ENGLAND, SCOTLAND, and WALES. And for the small handful in this nation owned by the Lord, we trust it shall be our care more naturally to look after and watch over them than heretofore; and the rather, because we have observed Satan our subtle enemy, (whose time we believe is short) by his depths and wiles, taking opportunity, by the peace and rest lent us by our God, ready to slay us, by casting us into carnal security, ever lulling our hearts to sleep, even in this hour, wherein, as before noted, we are especially called upon to be a praying watchful people, for surely the Lord is now at hand; therefore let us leave the beggarly pursuit of the things of this world, and let our moderation be known unto all men. Let our requests be made to our God for Sion, for each soul therein, for all the

particulars herein mentioned, for the peace and tranquility of the nation wherein we live, Jeremiah 29:7, and for the rulers and magistrates the Lord hath set over us, particularly for those with you. We should pray earnestly that judgments may be averted, privileges prized, as well as continued; and that we may understand and attend to the voice of God in his providence, particularly in his sore snatching and removing from us, not only useful members in Sion, but even our eyes, our hands, and our hearts; the never-to-be-forgotten young Draper, dear Consett, precious Pocke, useful Saffery, and that in the midst of their days, and the beginning of wondrous works. Oh, dear friends, were they too holy, too heavenly for our society! or did we abuse the mercy; some doting upon them, while others slighted, yea hardly took notice that there were prophets among them; or may we not all conclude that our indifferency, worldly-mindedness, and heart-hypocrisy, are so great, and have so highly provoked our God, that he is coming forth against us in displeasure with visitations and scourges, and therefore hath called home his chosen ones, that they may not see the evil that is coming upon us, nor stand in the gap?

And now, dear brethren, beloved of the Lord, let there never be any more occasion so much as to name this sad subject of silence amongst us; but rather let us be constant provokers of each other to every good word and work, by epistles, by our holy, humble, persevering, Christian conversation; following that precious and ever to be remembered example, our Lord Jesus Christ, and seeing that nothing can separate, neither height nor depth, between us and the everlasting love of our heavenly Father, in his dear Son, and those inestimable mansions prepared for us, where we for ever shall behold the glorious face of our God, and jointly sing the everlasting song of Moses and the Lamb: Oh, then let neither sea nor land, things present nor things to come, separate us from a Christian correspondence, whereby we may knowingly mourn with those that mourn, and rejoice with those that rejoice--that we may sympathizingly, in faith, offer supplications and praises, answerable to the dealings of our God with any of his members.--Finally, brethren, farewell! b

perfect, be of good comfort, be of one mind, &c. and the God of peace shall be with you.

Your poor brethren, yet fellow-heirs of the consolation ready to be revealed at the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ.

The names of the brethren who subscribed this Letter:--

At Waterford.

Robert Ringston, Thomas Shelson, Thomas Cawdron, Edward Marshall, Peter Row, Robert Merry, Thomas Boulton, Thomas Sparkling, John Thomas, John Row, William Leigh, Richard Leigh.

At Kilkenny.

Anthony Harrison, John Pratt, Humphrey Prichard, Thomas Alsop, Christ Blackwood, Richard Wood, John Court, Arnold Thomas

At Dubn.

James Hardish, Henry Jones, James Marely, William Sands, William Sault, Edward Roberts, Phil. Carcherol, Thomas Patient, Nico. Scott, Adrian Strong.

From the Church of Christ at Waterford, being now assembled upon the ground within mentioned, 1st day of the 4th month, [June] 1653.

The churches of Christ in Ireland, walking in the faith and order of the gospel, do agree together, through divine assistance, to set apart the first fourth day, called Wednesday, in every month, solemnly to seek the face of our God; and by fasting and prayer humbly to mourn before him for the things following; which is also recommended to our dear friends in England, and scattered brethren in several places, who have obtained like precious faith with us.

1. Our little knowledge of, and less trusting in the name of our God in Christ, so as to set him for ever before our eyes, that we may glorify him both in our bodies and souls, which are his, 1 Cor. 6:20; Heb. 5:12.
2. Our little sincere love to the Lord and his people, and our little knowledge of the office and proper place of each member, as God hath set him in the body of Christ; to the end that every particular member may be now effectually improved, for the mutual edification of the whole, 1 Cor. 12:19,20,21, &c. Eph. 4:16.
3. Our little serious searching into the word of God, and not substantially acquainting ourselves with the foundation truths revealed therein, 2 Tim. 3:15; 1 Pet. 2:2; Rom. 1:16,17.
4. Our little faith in the great and precious promises of the Lord, which are to be fulfilled in the last days, Luke 18:8; 2 Pet. 1:4.
5. Our little pressing toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus: and our inordinate affections after earthly things, Luke 10:40,41; Phil. 3:14; Col. 3:1,2.

6. Our little praying and praising frame of heart; in particular, for faithful labourers in the Lord's vineyard: and for all whom he hath put in authority over us, under whom we have had much opportunity to practise the truth we profess, Mat. 9:37,38; John 15:4; Psalm 22:3; 1 Cor. 2:4; 1 Tim. 2:2; 1 Pet. 2:14; Isaiah 9:7.

7. Our little concern for the sufferings of the people of God, Luke 18:7; Rev. 17:6.

8. Our great aptness to forget the things God hath done for us, and to abuse the many precious mercies God hath multiplied upon us.

9. Our little laying to heart the great breaches the Lord hath made among us, by removing many righteous ones from us.

10. Our want of spiritual wisdom to reprove sin plainly in all without respect of persons, and to exhort faithfully, so as to stop the mouths of gainsayers, and give no just offence to any.

11. Our little mourning for sin, both in ourselves and in others, Ezek. 9:4; Hos. 4:12.

12. Our great ignorance of the deceitfulness of our own hearts, Jeremiah 17:9,10.

These things, among many others, ought to be sufficient grounds of our lying low before the Lord, that he may lift us up in due time, and supply all our wants according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus, James 4:3,9,10; Phil. 4:19. [Thomas's Hist. of Welch Association.]

This letter produced such an effect on some of the churches in London, that they immediately took it into consideration: and from a conviction of its importance, after keeping a day of fasting and prayer, agreed to adopt its suggestions, and to enclose it with a letter to the churches in Wales, which was as follows:--

"Dearly beloved Brethren!

"While we were slumbering and sleeping, like these wise virgins mentioned by our Saviour in Matt. 25, regardless of the obligations and engagements to the Lord, which, by so many eminent and signal discoveries of love and works of wonder, wrought for us in these last days, he hath laid upon us; it hath pleased the Keeper of Israel, who neither slumbers nor sleeps, to raise up a quickening spirit in the hearts of our brethren of Ireland, provoking them to call upon us to awake to righteousness, to remember our first love, to rend our hearts and not our garments, and to turn to the Lord with out whole hearts; that doing our

first work, we may receive an answer of peace from the God of Peace; and healing of all our wounds from him, whose property is to heal backslidings, and to love freely; and that the weak among us may be strong as David, and David as an angel of God. We have sent you enclosed a copy of what we received from them, which we pray the Lord to sanctify unto you, as in some measure he hath done to us; that it may serve through the operation of the Spirit, as Nathan_s parable to David, and as the cock-crowing to Peter, to bring to your remembrance all that deadness, unfruitfulness, want of love, and unsuitableness of spirit, which have too much prevailed in you and upon you, to the grieving of the Spirit of God, to the hardening of such as know not the Lord, and the wounding of each others hearts in these times of gospel peace and liberty. We desire you to communicate the same to all our brethren near you; and with all convenient speed, not only to certify us what effect the subject therein contained hath wrought upon your hearts, but also to send us a particular account of their and your state and condition, relating to your communion with each other, as grounded upon your fellowship with the Father and the Son, in the faith of the gospel of Christ. In order thereto, we entreat your care and pains in visiting the several weak and scattered brethren in your parts, that from a thorough knowledge of, and acquaintance with their present standing, we may receive information from you; and our brethren in Ireland, according to their desire, from us; what churches and societies we may groundedly communicate with, according to the rule of Christ. We shall not offer arguments to persuade you to compliance with our brethren_s desire and ours; their arguments carry so much evidence and demonstration of truth, necessity and suitableness to the Gospel rule, in the very first view of them. We have already kept a day of holy fasting and prayer, upon the grounds therein expressed; and trust we shall never lay down our spiritual weapons, till satan, the world, and the lusts of our flesh, be made our footstool; which the Lord hasten, for Christ_s sake! to whose fatherly care and tuition we commend you, and subscribe ourselves,

"Your affectionate brethren in the faith and fellowship of the gospel,

William Kiffin, Edward Harrison, Thomas White, Joseph Sansom,
Thomas Cooper, Henry Hills, John Perry, Richard Tredwell, Robert
Bowes."

"Our great design in this letter is to obtain a full account of all the churches in England, Scotland, and Wales; therefore we desire you will inform us not only concerning your own state, but the state of any churches that are in your country, or near adjacent; that if it be possible we may have the full knowledge of all those that are one with us in the sound principles of truth: and to yourselves, or any other church of Christ, we shall be ready to give the like account, if desired, of ourselves, or the churches near us.

"From the several Churches of Christ in London, the 24th day of the 5th Month, 1653. Peter Scutt, or Scott." [Hist. of Welch Association.]

Mr. Scott, the writer of this letter, it will be seen by turning to page 237, as well as Robert Bowes were members of the church at the Glass House. It is probable they succeeded Messrs. Consett and Draper who appear to have laboured and died in Ireland. The manner in which they speak of these persons proves that they had been eminently useful, and that they were taken away in early life: and subsequent events fully justified their conclusion that the Lord had taken away these righteous men from the evil to come.

We know nothing further of the state of the churches in Ireland, till the year 1656, when a letter was sent by them to the churches at Ilston and Llantrisant in Glamorgaushire; which we insert to preserve the thread of our history.

Dublin 12th, 4th Month, 1656.

"Dear Brethren,

"We wish you a more deep rooting and establishing in the faith, that no storms of persecution on the one hand, nor error nor heresy on the other hand, may shake your faith. We thankfully acknowledge the good hand of God towards you in the multiplication of your number: the Lord multiply also your graces, that your faith may grow exceedingly; and the charity of every one of you all towards one another may abound. Ye are now in prosperous times; it will be your wisdom to prepare for a storm; for brethren, whenever did you know the people of God long without persecution? Yea, and that from the powers of the world. Mariners in a calm strengthen their tacklings against a storm comes. Besides ministerial teaching, we would commend unto you the use of good books; and take advice of some godly preacher, what are fit to buy: especially read the scriptures and study them: if ye also study your own hearts ye shall do well. Be careful to preserve entire unity, not only in keeping your communion together, but also in keeping your hearts together; sweetened in affection one to another without grudgings and murmurings. Let those who are rich among you strive to be large hearted to the poor among you; and so much the more because of the present distress, and because of the great hatred of the world, which saints of our judgment endure. Be very wary against scandals; because where the gospel comes in power, the devil is wont to rage, by scandals to swallow up, if it were possible, the church of God. We shall desire you to follow after enlargement of heart, both in contributions towards the poor and other church uses, and in the maintenance of them who dispense the word unto you, that such dispensers may give themselves wholly to the work, remembering that he who soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; in which duty some of us have observed, on your side the water, sundry persons, yea, we fear churches have come short. We desire you to press on for an established

ministry and eldership in your churches; and therefore herein be careful to buy the truth and sell it not. Take heed of the sin of earthly-mindedness, which sometimes lies hid under a large profession. Be careful of you or weak members, lest wolves in sheep's clothing, through pretended sanctity and seeming mortification get in among them. Labour to keep up in one another's heart an honourable esteem of the holy word of God, in opposition to the present delusions of the times. Engage not yourselves in heartless and speculative disputes; but rather be much in practical and edifying truths; knowing that the principles which naturally conduce to salvation are but few. Be careful that upon pretence of church-meetings you neglect not closet prayer, in which be careful to mourn under straits and rejoice in enlargements. Labour after a just, blameless, and shining life, that the world by your harmless and holy lives, may be instructed. Treasure up a large assurance against an evil day to come. Take heed of hardness of heart, and declining affections towards the Lord. Let your consciences witness your blameless conversation, for time past since your effectual calling; and your holy purpose for God in future.

"We remain your affectionate brethren in the gospel of Christ,

Thomas Patient, Christ. Blackwood, Edmund Roberts, Richard Lawem,
Thomas Seward, Henry Jones, P. Cudmore, William Hopkins, Arnold
Thomas."

We have no account of the churches in Ireland after this period, excepting that in the year 1659. Mr. Blackwood was still with the church at Dublin, at which time he published his Expositions and Sermons on the ten first chapters of Matthew. It is probable that the Restoration of Charles II. the next year caused such a revolution in the Kingdom of Ireland, that he and his brethren were obliged to return home; as we find several of their names signed to the declaration of the Baptists against Venner's rebellion. We think it proper not to pass this part of our history without making the following remarks.

Dissenters were at this time very much divided in sentiment about the government of the church and of the state.

All of them disapproved of Episcopacy; but the greater part, namely the Presbyterians, who were now the established sect, were not only advocates for the necessity of a religious establishment, but, although they had themselves been persecuted by the Episcopalians, were unfriendly to the toleration of the Independents and the Baptists.

The two last mentioned sects were advocates for congregational, congregated, or gathered churches, in contradistinction to parochial churches. Their churches were distinct from, and independent of, one another, and admitted of no other external interference than that of friendly advice. The pastors of a few of these, however, did not stand so far aloof from the national establishment as could have been wished. There were some of both denominations who were amongst the Triers, or licensers of preachers in

the establishment; and there were more, who, although they had distinct congregations of their own, not only preached in the parish churches, but also condescended to accept of the parochial tithes. But the great majority had no more support from government than the dissenters of the present day.

With regard to civil government, the congregational churches were divided into two classes.--The one left the consideration and regulation of it to the constituted authorities, and esteemed it their duty to be subject to the powers that were, whether the supreme authority was in the King, the Parliament, or the Protector. Contented with enjoying liberty of conscience in religious matters, and fearing God and the king, they meddled not with those who were given to change. They were not persecuted during the Protectorate of Cromwell, it being a principle of his government that no person should be persecuted for his religious sentiments. See *An Olive Leaf: or some Peaceable Considerations, &c.* for Mr. Rogers, Mr. Powel, and the rest of the good people of Christ Church, by William Erbery, January 9, 1653. Wherein are asked the following questions: "Is it according to the order of the gospel, for ministers of Christ to meddle with civil government, seeing his kingdom is not of this world? John 18:36; Luke 22:25.--Did ever the ministers of the gospel speak against principalities and powers, though as bad as Nero? Rom. 13:1,2, &c.; 1 Tim. 1:2; Titus 3:1,2; 1 Pet. 2:13,14.--Doth civil government concern the glory of the gospel? Is monarchy in a king any more against the reign of Christ, than aristocracy in a parliament? Is not the state of Holland, and commonwealth of Venice, as much for Antichrist as the king of France or Spain? Isaiah 19:11,13." The other class maintained that the reign of Antichrist was approaching to a close; that the time was at hand spoken of by Daniel, when the saints should take the kingdom and possess it; that Christ was about to reign on the earth in the midst of his people for a thousand years; and that he by his power would shortly make the wicked as ashes under the feet of the righteous. Hence Harrison, Powel, Feak, Simpson, Rogers, and others, were greatly displeased when Cromwell usurped the supreme power. So great was the discontent which they manifested, that, fearing insurrections in the city, he committed them to prison. To this they cheerfully submitted, calling it persecution for conscience sake, whilst those of the former class pitied their ill-directed zeal and were of opinion that they were buffeted for their faults.

We learn from this correspondence that the ministers that presided over these churches in England, Ireland, and Wales, and the people that composed them, were all of them opposed to those Baptists that intermeddled with the civil affairs of the country. While those who confounded the church and the world together were in constant perplexity and alarm, they seem to have enjoyed peace themselves, and to have endeavoured to promote peace amongst their brethren, who had not learned to be in subjection to the supreme power, by whatever name it was called.

Those who were called fifth-monarchy men ought to be distinguished into different classes. Venner and his associates were certainly mad enthusiasts, and thought that the kingdom of Christ was to be established by the sword. But none who know the characters of such men as Mr. Jessey and Mr. Knollys will suppose that they would go to the same lengths, although they lived at a period in which the nature of Christ's kingdom was far

from being clearly understood. Without, however, attempting farther to vindicate them, we will give the sentiments of those who were called fifth-monarchy men in their own words, as contained in the declaration before mentioned.--"We find much misunderstanding among some, (they say,) and misrepresentation among most, of the fifth-monarchy, or kingdom of Christ in the nations, which the holy scriptures of the old and new testament do clearly and plentifully declare, with a positive period to the worldly heathenish laws, ordinances, and constitutions of men, as they are now executed in the nations of the world: and whereas it is also upon the hearts of many of the choice servants of God, that in this present age the Lord Jehovah is setting up the fifth kingdom, (Dan. 2:44; 7:22, 26, 27,) which shall not be left to other people, but shall break in pieces all the other kingdoms, and remain for ever and ever; and that whereas at this time the fourth monarchy is partly broken in these nations, it is that Christ may be the only Potentate, the King of Kings, and of all nations. Mic. 4:7; Zech. 9:9,10; Col. 1:16; 1 Tim. 6:15; Heb. 2:8; Rev. 11:15,17; Rev. 14; Rev. 19. Now finding this the present truth so much opposed by the national rulers and their clergy, yea, and by some godly people and church members accounted orthodox, who cannot endure the day of the Lord's coming; we therefore are resolved, according to the presence and assistance of the Lord with us, to entertain a serious consideration and debate for the benefit of all others, touching the premises; viz. of the laws, subjects, extent, rise, time, place, offices and officers of the fifth-monarchy or kingdom, whereby the world must be governed according to the word of God, without the mixture, as now is, of men's laws and inventions, whether in respect of magistracy or ministry, church or civil affairs. Which debate we intend to hold in this city of London; and we desire our beloved brethren who are one with us in the present truth and sufferings, whether in church or out, in city or country, who are enlightened, to take special notice of it for this end, that they may enjoy the like freedom with us in those meetings and debates, as often as they please to come. And if the Lord give us the liberty, we do propose to proceed with the debate of it from this day onward, until we have taken a full narrative thereof, so far as it shall appear to us out of the scriptures fit to publish to the view of all men, that our principles on that point of the fifth-monarchy may be fully known." [Declaration, &c. pp. 16,17.]

It is highly probable that this design was prevented by the vigilance of the government. The protector found these persons, with the republicans in the state, who were generally deists, the most difficult to manage of any. The religious commonwealth-men he endeavoured to gain by kindness. He told them that "he had no manner of inclination to assume the government, but had rather been contented with a shepherd's staff, were it not absolutely necessary to keep the nation from falling to pieces, and becoming a prey to the common enemy. That he merely stepped in between the living and the dead, as he expressed it, and this only till God should direct them on what bottom to settle, when he would surrender his dignity with a joy equal to the sorrow with which he had taken it up." With the chiefs of this party he affected to converse upon terms of great familiarity, shutting the door, and making them sit down covered in his presence to let them see how little he valued those distances he was bound to observe for form's sake with others. He talked with them in their own language, and the conversation generally ended with a long prayer.

Notwithstanding all this familiarity, they were so opposed to the government_s being in a single person, as in their opinion contrary to the kingly interest of Christ, that instead of being allured to acknowledge it, they say, "Our bowels are so moved at these things that we cannot refrain from bewailing our condition, after so vast a stream and treasure of our blood, tears, prayers, lives, and spoils of our dearest relations. O, did we ever think to see so many hopeful instruments in the army, churches, and elsewhere, to be so fully gorged with the flesh of kings, captains, and nobles; with their lands, manors, estates, parks, and palaces, so as to sit at ease and comply with antichrist, the world, worldly church, and clergy!" [Declaration, &c. p. 4.]

When the protector found they could not be gained by favour, he was determined to crush them; and therefore, as we have heard, several of the ministers were imprisoned, and Major General Harrison was deprived of his commission. For several years the republicans attempted a revolution in the government; and at length, failing in their design, they agreed in 1658 to the number of three hundred to attempt it by force; and having killed the protector, to proclaim King Jesus. But Secretary Thurloe, who spared no cost to gain intelligence, had a spy among them who discovered their intentions, and seized their arms and ammunition in Shoreditch with their standard exhibiting a lion conchant, alluding to the lion of the tribe of Judah, with this motto, Who will rouse him up? The chief of the conspirators, as Venner, Grey, Hopkins, &c. were imprisoned in the gatehouse till the protector_s death, with their accomplices, Major General Harrison, Colonel Rich, Colonel Danvers, and others.

The protector appears to have formed more correct sentiments on the subject of religion in reference to the state than most of the ministers, whether Episcopalians, Presbyterians, Independents, or the fifth-monarchy men, who were principally, though not exclusively, Baptists. These all, in different ways confounded the church and the state together, and did not keep the civil and religious privileges of men upon a separate basis. Hence many of them who "meddled with those that were given to change," were swallowed up in the vortex of worldly politics; and, as Cromwell used to tell them, suffered not for conscience sake, but for being busy bodies in other men_s matters, and for not minding their own business.

It is presumed that the protector never permitted any to be oppressed for religious principles, except in the case of John Biddle, the Socinian, and which it is generally thought he endeavoured to prevent. When Mr. Kiffin was brought before the lord-major at Guildhall, July 12, 1655, and charged with having violated the laws by preaching that the baptism of infants was unlawful, the lord-mayor, being occupied about other matters, deferred the execution of the penalty required by that act till the Monday following.-- From the manner in which Mr. Kiffin was treated by the mayor, it is probable that he never heard any more of the prosecution; and there is no doubt but this arose more from the friendship of Cromwell, than the good will or liberality of the governing Presbyterians.

We have said that there were several eminent Baptist ministers among the Teiers who were appointed by the protector, instead of the Assembly of Divines at Westminster, for

removing those from the parish churches who were ignorant and scandalous. "They had power (says Mr. Baxter,) to try all that came for institution or induction, and without their approbation none were admitted. They themselves examined all that were able to come up to London: but if they were unable or of doubtful qualifications, they referred them to some ministers in the county where they lived, and approved them if they approved them. And with all their faults, thus much must be said of these Triers, that they did a great deal of good to the church, and saved many a congregation from ignorant, ungodly, drunken teachers. That sort of ministers who either preached against a holy life, or preached as men that never were acquainted with it; all those who used the ministry only as a common trade to live by, and were never likely to convert a soul,, they usually rejected; and in their stead admitted of any that were able, serious preachers, and lived a godly life, of what opinion soever they were that was tolerable." [Baxter_s Life, p. 72.]

It was doubtless at this time that some of the Baptists accepted of livings in the national establishment, though it is presumed the far greater part of them viewed this as a dereliction of principle in Dissenters, and more especially in Baptists.

Of those who thus conformed were those who accepted the appointment of Teiers. Mr. Tombes, B.D. had the living of Leominster in the county of Hereford; Mr. Daniel Dyke, M.A. of Great Hadham in Hertfordshire; and Mr. Henry Jessey, of St. George_s, Southwark. There must have been some difficulties arising from the Independent, and still more from Baptist ministers becoming rectors of parishes; but their churches were not composed indiscriminately of their parishioners, neither were they confined to persons resident in their respective parishes.

Edwards, in his Antapologia, charges them with the last of these things as an inconsistency, and says, "Your congregations, as in London, where the meeting-place is, and the ministers reside, are made up of members, as of some living in London, so of some in Surrey, Middlesex, Hertfordshire, Essex, where they have *fixum domicilium*, being twenty miles asunder; and many members meeting but once in a month, where neither ministers can oversee them, nor members watch over one another, not knowing what the conversation of each other is, which are yet brought as the main grounds of your church-fellowship; which non-residence of the members from each other, and of the officers from so many of the members, whether it overthrow not, and be not point-black against many of your principles on the church-way, I leave to yourselves to judge." [p. 96.]

Mr. Jessey appears to have continued as pastor of his church, notwithstanding his being rector of St. George_s.--He was ordained over Mr. Lathorpe_s church in 1637; and in this vineyard, it is said, he continued a faithful and laborious minister till his death. Crosby says, "He divided his labours in the ministry according to the extensiveness of his principles. Every Lord_s day in the afternoon he was among his own people; in the morning he usually preached at St. George_s church, Southwark, being one of the fixed ministers of that parish."

It is probable that Mr. Jessey's people either attended St. George's church in the morning, or else obtained a supply, as it does not appear that Mr. Jessey had any assistant. It is likely that his church of Dissenters was attended to in the same manner as before, and that as rector he did not do much besides preaching in his parish. As he was "one" of the settled ministers, perhaps there was another, either of the Presbyterian or Independent congregation, settled with him, who baptized the children, &c.; and as Mr. Jessey always admitted of mixed communion in his church, he would find no difficulty in administering the Lord's supper, as it is presumed the canons of the church were now no longer binding, and ministers would be at liberty to admit those only to the table of whose piety they were well satisfied.

Respecting Mr. Tombes, we are told by Mr. Crosby, that the people at Bewdley having invited him to become their minister, "he began here to preach and dispute publicly against infant baptism; and seeing no prospect of any reformation of the church in this point, he then gathered a separate church of those of his own persuasion, continuing at the same time minister of the parish." This is asserted by Crosby on the declaration of Fisher, in his Baby baptism no baptism; where, in the place referred to, he says, "I find all the people in Bewdley were church-members with Mr. Baxter at Kidderminster." Hence it is inferred, that Mr. Tombes would not administer the Lord's supper to any who had not been baptized. Mr. Baxter says that this church never increased to more than twenty persons. Crosby acknowledges "this society of Baptists was never very numerous, but consisted of those who were of good esteem for their piety and solid judgment; and that three eminent ministers were trained up in it: Mr. Richard Adams, Mr. John Eccles, and one Captain Boylston. The church continued till the restoration.

The Baptists who were in opposition to Cromwell must have been very uncomfortable during the remainder of his government, as he never suffered them to act to the full extent of their principles. But those who acted peaceably, and who were denominated the sober party, were much esteemed, and universally protected.

"At length (says Calamy) Cromwell, who had escaped the attempts of many who sought to dispatch him, could not escape the stroke of God, but died suddenly of a fever, September 3, 1658. In giving his character, he adds

"Never man was more highly extolled, or more basely reported of and vilified than this man, according as men's interested led their judgments. The soldiers and sectaries highly magnified him, till he began to seek the crown, and the establishment of his family; and then there were so many that would behalf kings themselves, that a king seemed intolerable to them. The royalists abhorred him as a most perfidious hypocrite; and the Presbyterians thought him little better in his management of public affairs. Upon the whole, Mr. Baxter has left this as his judgment concerning him:-
- That he began low, and rose higher in his resolutions as his condition rose; and the promises he made in his lower condition he used as the interest of his higher following condition required; and kept as much

honesty and godliness in the main as his cause and interest would allow him, and there they left him. His name stands as a monument of pillar to posterity, to tell them the instability of man in strong temptations, if God leave him to himself; what pride can do to make men selfish, and corrupt the heart with ill designs; what selfishness and ill designs can do to bribe the conscience, corrupt the judgment, make men justify the greatest errors and sins, and set themselves against the clearest truth or duty; what bloodshed, and great enormities of life, an erring deluded judgment may draw men to do and patronize; and that when God hath dreadful judgments to execute, an erroneous sectary, or a proud self seeker, is oftener his instrument than a humble innocent saint." [Baxter_s Life, p. 71.]

While it is readily acknowledged that Mr. Baxter had many opportunities of knowing the protector_s read character, and though his integrity in giving it is not in the least suspected, yet it should be considered that as a Presbyterian he was likely to be prejudiced against him. We therefore think it right to give the opinion of Dr. Owen also; who knew him probably better than even Mr. Baxter; and who gave his opinion of him after Cromwell had attained the summit of his ambition, and had practised all those arts of hypocrisy with which his memory has been loaded. The following is extracted from Dr. Owen_s excellent work dedicated to the protector, entitled, *The doctrine of the saint_s perseverance*, printed at Oxford in the year 1654:

"In the midst of all the changes and mutations which the infinitely wise providence of God doth daily effect in the greater and lesser things of this world: as to the communications of his love in Jesus Christ, and the merciful gracious distributions of the unsearchable riches of his graced, and the hid treasures thereof purchased by his blood! he knows no repentance: of both these you have had full experience. And though your concernment with the former, hath been as eminent as that of any person whatever in these latter ages of the world, yet your interest in and acquaintance with the latter is of incomparable more importance in itself, so answerably of more value and esteem unto you. A sense of the excellency and sweetness of unchangable love, emptying itself in the golden oil of distinguishing spiritual mercies, is one letter of that new name which none can read but he that hath it. The series and chains of eminent providences, whereby you have been carried on, and protected in all the hazardous work of your generation, which God hath called you to is evident to all. Of your preservation by the power of God through faith, in a course of gospel obedience, upon the account of the immutability of the love, and the infallibility of the promises of God, which are yea and amen in Jesus Christ, your own soul is only possessed of the experience. That I have taken upon me to present my weak endeavour to your highness is so far forth from my persuasion of your interest in the truth contended for, (and than which you have none so excellent and worthy) that without it, no consideration whatever, either of that dignity and power whereunto of God you are called, nor of your particular regard to that society of men whereof

I am an unworthy member, nor any other personal respect whatever, could have prevailed with or emboldened me thereunto.--*Sancta sanctis.*"

In summing up his character, Neal says, "Upon the whole, it is not to be wondered at that the character of this GREAT MAN has been transmitted down to posterity with some disadvantage, by the several factions of royalists, presbyterians, and republicans, because each were disappointed, and enraged, to see the supreme power wrested from them; but his management is a convincing proof of his great abilities. He was at the helm in the most stormy and tempestuous season that England ever saw; but by his consummate wisdom and valour he disconverted the measures and designs of his enemies, and preserved both himself and the commonwealth from shipwreck. I shall only observe further, with Rapin, that the confusion which prevailed in England after the death of Cromwell, clearly evidenced the necessity of this usurpation, at least till the constitution could be restored."

Richard Cromwell, who succeeded his father, was not able to rule the different sects, and it appears that the religious people of the fifth-monarchy principles were very troublesome to him. Calamy says, "The fifth-monarchy men, under Sir Henry Vane, raised a clamorous party against him from amongst the city sectaries. Rogers and Feak, and such like fire-brands, blew the coals, but the assembly at Wallingford-house did the main business. They set up a few among themselves under the name of a council of state, wherein Fleetwood was uppermost, and Lambert next to him."

"But these officers (says Neal) had lost their credit; their measures were disconcerted and broken; one party was for a treaty, and another for the sword, but it was too late; their old veteran regiments were dislodged from the city, and Monk in possession. In this confusion, their General Fleetwood, who had brought them into this distress, retired, and left a body without a head, after which they became insignificant, and in a few months quite contemptible. Here ended the power of the army, and of the Independents."

As our work is designed to be rather a history of religion than of politics, we conclude this chapter by shewing what was the influence of those strict religious principles which were acted upon at this time on the morals and happiness of the people; and on the general prosperity of the nation.--We shall do this by copying the judicious reflections of Neal *on the times before and after the restoration.*

"And here was an end (says he) of those unhappy times which our historians have loaded with all the infamy and reproach that the wit of man could invent. The Puritan ministers have been represented as ignorant mechanics, canting preachers, enemies to learning, and no better than public robbers. The universities were said to be reduced to a mere Munster, and that, if the Goths and Vandals, and even the Turks, had overrun the nation, they could not have done more to introduce barbarism and disloyal ignorance; and yet in these times, and by the men that then filled the university chairs, were educated the most learned divines and eloquent preachers of the last age, as the Stillingfleets, Tillotsons, Bulls, Barrows,

Whitbys, and others, who retained a high veneration for their learned tutors, after they were ejected and laid aside. The religious part of the common people have been stigmatized with the character of hypocrites; their looks, their dress and behaviour, have been painted in the most frightful colours; and yet one may venture to challenge those writers to produce any period of time since the reformation, wherein there was less open profaneness and impiety, and more of the spirit and appearance of religion. Perhaps there was a little too much rigour and preciseness in indifferent matters, which might be thought running into a contrary extreme. But the lusts of men were laid under a very great restraint; and though the legal constitution was unhappily broken to pieces, and men were governed by false politics, yet better laws were never made against vice, and those laws never better put into execution. The dress, the language, and conversation of people was sober and virtuous, and their manner of house-keeping remarkably frugal. There was hardly a single bankruptcy to be heard of in a year, and in such a case the bankrupt had a mark of infamy upon him that he could never wipe off. The vices of drunkenness, fornication, profane swearing, and every kind of debauchery were banished and out of fashion. The clergy of these times were laborious to excess in preaching and praying, in catechizing youth, and visiting their parishes.--The magistrates did their duty in suppressing all kind of games, stage plays, and abuses in public-houses. There was not a play acted in any part of England for almost twenty years. The Lord's day was observed with unusual strictness; and there were a set of as learned and pious youths in the university as had been known. So that if such a reformation of manners had been obtained under a legal administration, they would have deserved the character of the best of times.

"But when the legal restoration was restored, there came in with it a torrent of all kinds of debauchery and wickedness. The times that followed the Restoration were the reverse of those that went before; for the laws which had been made against vice for the last twenty years being declared null, and the magistrates changed, men set no bounds to their appetites. A proclamation indeed was published against those loose and riotous cavaliers, whose loyalty consisted in drinking healths, and railing at those who would not revel with them; but in reality the king was at the head of these disorders, who was devoted to his pleasures; having given himself up to an avowed course of lewdness; his bishops and doctors said, that he usually came from his mistresses' lodgings to church, even on sacrament days.--There were two play-houses erected in the neighbourhood of the court. Women actresses were introduced upon the English stage, which had not been known till that time; the most lewd and obscene plays were acted; and the more obscene, the better did they please the king, who graced the acting every new play with his presence. Nothing was to be seen at court but feasting, hard drinking, revelling, and amorous intrigues, which produced the most enormous vices. From the court the contagion

spread like wild-fire among the common people, insomuch that men threw off every profession of virtue and piety, under colour of drinking the king's health; all kinds of old cavalier rioting and debauchery revived; the appearances of religion which remained with some furnished matter of ridicule to the profane mockers of real piety. Some who had been concerned in the former transactions thought they could not redeem their credit better than by laughing at all religion, and telling or making stories to expose their former piety, and make them appear ridiculous.

"To appear serious, or make conscience of one's words and actions, was the way to be avoided as a schismatic, a fanatic, or a sectarian; though if there was any real religion during the course of this reign, it was chiefly among those people. They who did not applaud the new ceremonies were marked out for Presbyterians, and every Presbyterian was a rebel. The old clergy, who had been sequestered for scandal, having taken possession of their livings, were intoxicated with their new felicity, and threw off all the restraints they were under before. Every week (says Mr. Baxter) produced reports of one or other clergyman who was taken up by the watch drunk at night, and mobbed in the streets. Some were taken with lewd women; and one was reported drunk in the pulpit. Such was the general dissolution of manners which attended the tide of joy that overflowed the nation upon his majesty's restoration!" [Neal, vol. iv. p. 271-274.]

Who can help exclaiming on surveying this picture, RIGHTEOUSNESS EXALTETH A NATION; BUT SIN IS THE REPROACH OF ANY PEOPLE.

VOLUME I.

CHAP. VIII.

1660 - 1667.

Charles II. [king of England, Scotland, and Ireland from 1660-1685] was restored to the throne of his ancestors, May 29, 1660. In his majesty's declaration from Breda, before his return, it was said, "We do also declare a liberty to tender consciences, and that no man shall be disquieted or called in question for differences of opinion in matters of religion, which do not disturb the peace of the kingdom." How far his conduct accorded with these professions, the events of his reign will abundantly show. The share which the Baptists had in them we shall proceed to narrate.

In Lord Clarendon's *History of the Rebellion* there is an address which was presented by the Baptists to the king, while he was at Bruges, in the year 1657-8. This was stated to be "The humble address of the subscribers in behalf of themselves and many thousands more, his majesty's most humble and faithful subjects." In it they say, "they took up arms in the late war for liberty and reformation, but assure his majesty they were so far from entertaining any thoughts of casting off their allegiance, or extirpating the royal family,

that they had not the least intent to abridge the king of his just prerogatives, but only the restraining those excesses of government which were nothing but the excrescences of a wanton power, and were rather a burden than an ornament to the royal diadem." In this address they declaim against the Protector, calling him that *grand imposter, that loathsome hypocrite, that detestable traitor, the prodigy of nature, the opprobrium of mankind; a landskip of iniquity, a sink of sin, a compendium of baseness*. Then, begging pardon for their former offences, they promise to sacrifice their lives and fortunes for his majesty's restoration, provided his majesty would be so gracious as to restore the remains of the long parliament; to ratify the treaty of the Isle of Wight; to establish liberty of conscience; to take away tithes, and provide some other maintenance for the national clergy; and to pass an act of oblivion for all who had been in arms against his father and himself, except those who should adhere to that ungodly tyrant who calls himself Lord Protector. This was signed by twelve persons. The historian adds, asking the sum of two thousand pounds to carry on the project, his majesty dismissed him with civil expressions, telling him that he had no design to trouble any man for his opinions.

Mr. Neal thinks there is no truth in this statement of Lord Clarendon's. "If (says he) there had been such an address, it is a little strange that after the restoration it was not remembered to their advantage." If however, there is any argument in this, it applies equally against those Presbyterian ministers who waited on his majesty at Breda, and who it is well known were treated with as much neglect afterwards as the Baptists. It is remarkable that the terms which they proposed in order to assist the king were the same as were afterwards moved by the celebrated Judge Hale, and the adopting of which in all probability would have prevented many of the distressing scenes which afterwards took place. Whatever may be thought of their conduct in presenting this address to the king, it certainly proves that they better understood what was necessary to the securing of civil and religious liberty, than the Presbyterians. But it is not at all probable that the whole body of the Baptists were implicated in this affair. It is most likely that the petitioners were some of those who were enemies to Cromwell, and who would have preferred any government to his, and therefore wished to bring back the king, thinking, perhaps, justly, that a monarchical government was preferable to a military despotism.

The restoration of the king was a signal for the enemies of the dissenters to manifest their opposition to them. Some of the sufferings which the Baptists endured were published in this year, by the pious Henry Jessey, in a work entitled, *The Lord's Loud Call to England*. He calls a part of this, "A relation of the imprisonings, plunderings, and barbarous inhumanity and cruelty, that hath lately been practised towards several ministers of the gospel and other peaceable people, in Wales, Lincolnshire, Gloucestershire, and other places; especially since the late remnant of the long parliament, by their outing of many, prepared a coffin for themselves and others."--After mentioning some circumstances that happened in Wales, he says, "The gross abuses to many good peaceable people in Lincolnshire, here follow, as they were shewed in their narrative or complaint thereof to the king, near the end of July 1660, testified under many of their hands." The narrative alluded to was by the help of a member of parliament presented to the king by the celebrated Mr. Thomas Grantham, and Mr. Joseph Wright, July 26, 1660, is as follows; entitled *Part of a Narrative and Complaint, &c.*

"May it please you, &c.

"Being commanded thereto by the Lord, we have met often together to acquaint each other what God hath done, doeth daily, and will do for our souls; and what therefore we ought to do towards him, each other, and all men.

"From which assemblings, oh king, we have been discharged by some in magistratical capacity in these parts, although therein we bless God none hath ever found us with multitude or with tumult; but being taught of God to obey him in the things by him commanded, rather than man (though in the place of magistracy) when commanded things contrary, we therefore durst not receive that discharge. Whereupon some of us have been silenced from making mention of the name of the Lord as formerly, by being entangled in bonds pretendedly imposed upon us for this good behaviour; to which in our innocency we readily yielded, being bound to the good behaviour in conscience, we feared not to be bound thereto by law.

"But such is the sad estate of this generation, that they call good evil, and evil good, with sorrow we speak it; taking their advantage against us in serving the Lord. Upon the account of the condition of these obligations, accounting us, oh king, peace-breakers, when in the sincerity of our hearts and innocency of our souls, we peaceably meet to worship our God, in his fear we affirm it.

"Since thus entangled, oh king, we have been much abused as we pass in the streets, and as we sit in our houses; being threatened to be hanged, if but heard praying to our Lord in our own families, and disturbed in our so waiting upon him, by uncivil beating at our doors and sounding of horns; yea, we have been stoned when going to our meetings, the windows of the place where we have met have been struck down with stones: yea, taken as evil-doers, and imprisoned, when peaceably met together to worship the Most High in the use of his most precious ordinances.

"We have, oh king, spread these things before them in authority in those parts, but can have no redress from them; but the rage of our adversaries hath been augmented by hearing us abused by some of them in open court who sat on the bench of justice, under the odious terms of knavish, juggling, impudent, and fanatic fellows, &c. And as if all this were too little, they have to fill up their measure very lately indicted many of us at the sessions; and intend, as we are informed, to impose on us the penalty of twenty pounds for not coming to hear such men as they provide us; of whose principles and practices we could give a most sad and doleful, yet, oh king, a most true relation."

Signed by

John Watts, William Burton, John Dawson, Thomas Harrison, Peter Betts, William Roweth, Richard Wilkinson, James Dyon, Robert Richardson, Roger Fawn, William Hunter, William Dawson, Joseph Brittain, Robert Maultbey, Luke Robinson, William Harker, Robert Fletcher, William Hill, Edward Wood, Thomas Croft, Thomas Maxworth, Thomas Clay, Robert Grantham, Charles Cock, John Rutter, James Carden, Richard Clark, Robert Pagson, Thomas Ratcliffe, George Pay, Matthias Bromby, John Gree, Robert Shalder, Joseph Wright, Thomas Grantham.

There was delivered to the king at the same time a Confession of faith, which he very graciously accepted, and returned a favourable answer. The substance of it was as follows: "That it was not his mind that any of his good subjects, who lived peaceably, should suffer any trouble on account of their opinions in point of religion, and that he had declared the same in several declarations. He promised us also, (say they,) upon declaring our grievances, that he would have particular care over us, that none should trouble us on account of our consciences, in things pertaining to religion. And while we were present before him he ordered an honourable member of parliament to go to the lord chancellor, and secretary, and get something done to that purpose. The members of parliament promised that he would do as the king had ordered him." [*Lord's Loud Call*, pp. 15-17.]

This confession or declaration of faith, it is probable, was published soon after, as it said to have been "lately presented to King Charles II., and set forth by many of us who are falsely called Anabaptists, to inform all men in these days of scandal and reproach of our innocent belief and practice; for which we are not only resolved to suffer persecution to the loss of our goods, but also life itself, rather than to decline the same." Subscribed by certain elders, deacons, and brethren, met in London, on behalf of themselves and many others in several counties, of the same faith with us, March 1661.

"Joseph Wright, William Jeffery, Thomas Monk, John Hartnoll, Benjamin Morley, Francis Stanley, George Hammon, William Smart, John Reeve, Thomas Parrot, John Wood, Francis Smith, Edward Jones, Humphrey Jones, Matthew Caffin, Samuel Loveday, John Parsons, Sen., Thomas Stacey, Edward Stanley, Jonathan Jennings, John Hammersly, William Russell, Joseph Keech, Nicholas Newbery, Samuel Lover, George Wright, John Parsons, Jun., Thomas Grantham, John Clayton, Thomas Seele, Michael Whitticar, Giles Browne, John Wells, Stephen Torie, Thomas Lathwell, William Chadwell, William Raph, Henry Browne, William Paine, Richard Bowin, Thomas Smith.

"Owned and approved by more than twenty thousand." [Crosby, vol. ii. Appendix, p. 90.]

The persons who signed this confession appear to have been General Baptists from different parts of the Kingdom, and it is probable they had suffered in a similar manner to their brethren in Lincolnshire.

In Berkshire also there was great opposition, as may be gathered from the work of Mr. Jessy_s before referred to. He says he had received a letter from Reading prison, dated July 16, 1660, where divers peaceable persons were put, having oaths put upon them which they were not satisfied to take. Of the Lord_s instructing and comforting them and their relations they state as follows:--

"Our Lord and King whom we serve hath brought us under his own pavilion, and his banner over us hath been and still is love, and hath been teaching us these lessons following.--(1.) In the loss of all outward things, having Christ, we enjoy all things, and are satisfied in the Lord. We shall take the spoiling of our goods with far more comfort than the enemy will do in the spending them; for that word in Job 20:22,23, is very much upon our hearts concerning him.--(2.) We hope that we have learned in whatsoever condition we are therewith to be content; and are persuaded in our hearts that this is given us in answer to many prayers breathed forth to the Lord on our behalf.--(3.) That whereas formerly we could hardly part with any thing for the Lord, we are now made willing, by him, to part with all things for his sake, and to say with good old Eli, *It is the Lord, let him do what seemeth him good*. That also in Job is set before us for our example on whom the ends of the world are come: *The Lord gave and the Lord hath taken away; and blessed be the name of the Lord*.--(4.) We have, since our confinement, tasted a greater sweetness in the promises of the Lord than formerly; and particularly these places following we have had sweet experience of. Duet. 33:25; Phil. 4:19; 1 Pet. 5:7. And we can say by experience, That faithful is he that hath promised, for he hath also done it. It is the Lord_s doing, and marvellous in our eyes! We are also brought by the power of his grace to a more watchful frame over our hearts, thoughts, and actions, by these trials, than formerly.

"One thing that had almost slipt our memory, the knowledge of which will we hope rejoice your hearts; that our relations, who are precious to the Lord and to us, bear this our suffering with incomparable patience, rather singing for joy than weeping for grief. Also our societies from whence we are taken are exceedingly cheerful, and a very lively spirit of faith and prayer is amongst them, and their meetings rather increase than otherwise. Sure that the Lord is near, his wondrous works declare; for the singing of birds is come, and the voice of the turtle is heard in the land.

"And now, brethren, for as much as the mercies expected, and prayed for by us, are to be enjoyed in the way of righteousness, it greatly concerns us, and we cry mightily to the Lord, as did his servant of old. Isaiah 62:1. Then shall we have that new name, expressed in the last verse of that

chapter. Now the God of all peace fill you with peace and joy in believing!
So pray your brethren through grace,

"John Jones, Richard Steed, Robert Keate, Thomas Jones, John Peck, John Combes."

The spirit of dissipation and irreligion that prevailed, may be conceived of by the following circumstances. A letter from a scholar at Oxford to Mr. Henry Jessey, says, "There was a play acted here by scholars, wherein one acted the old puritan. He who acted that part came in with a narrow hand, short hair, and a broad hat: a boisterous fellow comes after him, and trips up his heels, calling him a puritan rogue: at which words the old puritan shook off the dirt of his feet against him. Two of these actors are cut off: and he that acted the part of the old puritan broke a vein, and vomited so much blood in the place that they thought he would have died in the room: he now lieth desperately sick. A woman who also joined them in the play is also dead." [Lord's Loud Call, p. 2.]

Great alterations took place at this time in the colleges, where many eminent men were displaced. "Likewise (says Mr. Jessey) several ministers in London and Westminster, and many hundreds throughout England, and some in Ireland, have of late been put out, or are to be put out; and we cannot hear that better are put in their places. And whereas it is said that in the time of their long parliament many centuries of ministers were displaced, it is answered that it was generally in regard of being scandalous ministers, as that century set forth by Mr. White the chairman shows. Though it is true, some others were outed only for not taking that engagement they would have put upon them, which was indeed a grievous evil, and was testified against by the publisher hereof, and by many who are now termed fanatics, who testified also publicly against the decimatings, &c." [Ibid. p. 28,29.]

Mr. Jessey's account respecting the ministers who were cast out is confirmed by Mr. Neal. "The convention parliament (he says) passed several acts with relation to the late times. One was an act for the confirming and restoring of ministers, which enacts among other things, that every sequestered minister who has not justified the late king's murder, or declared against infant baptism, shall be restored to his living before the 25th of December next ensuing, and the present incumbent shall peaceably quit it, and be accountable for dilapidations, and all arrears of fifths not paid."--By this act some hundreds of nonconformist ministers were dispossessed of their livings before the act of uniformity was passed. "Here was no distinction (continues Mr. Neal) between good and bad; but if the parson had been episcopally ordained, and in possession, he must be restored, though he had been ejected on the strongest evidence of immorality or scandal." To this should have been added, if the sequestered minister had not declared against infant baptism; a crime which had no doubt in many instances been committed, and which was of such magnitude that it could not be forgiven, but was a disqualification, while immorality and scandal were no objection. Immoral ministers were thus brought into the church of England, and pious ministers were turned out of it.

There was also an act for the "attainder of several persons guilty of the horrid murder of his late sacred majesty King Charles I., and for the perpetual observation of the thirtieth of January."

Of the ten persons who were executed on this charge, one was Major General Harrison, who has been already mentioned as at the head of that religious party in the state who were called Fifth Monarchy-men, and were for the kingly authority of Jesus Christ, and strongly opposed to religious establishments. As this person was of considerable consequence among the Baptists during this convulsive period, it may not be improper to introduce his history in this place.

He was born in obscurity, being the son of a butcher near Nantwich in Cheshire. He was a lawyer_s clerk: "but" says Lord Clarendon "Cromwell finding him of a spirit and disposition fit for his service, and much given to prayer and preaching, made him his confidant, as there were but few men with whom Cromwell more communicated, or upon whom he more depended."

His lordship gives a long account of his behaviour to the king when he received him as the commander of a troop of horse from Hurst Castle. The king, it appears, had received a violent suspicion of him from its being said that he intended to murder him; but he acknowledged on seeing him that his opinion of his character was totally changed.

It should seem that Harrison was very desirous of bringing the king to trial, and was very active on his trial and at his execution. He it was also who commanded the grenadiers when Oliver Cromwell dissolved the long parliament, and politely handed the speaker out of the chair when he manifested some reluctance to quit it. Cromwell found it convenient to cast the odium of this transaction upon Landert and Harrison. Of the last he said, "Major General Harrison is an honest man, and aims at good things; yet from the impatience of his spirit, he will not wait the Lord_s leisure, but hurries me on to that which he and all honest men will live to repent." For a time Harrison was his particular friend because of his great influence with the religious republicans; but when Cromwell found that his republican principles did not suit his ambitious designs, and, as Mr. Baxter says, "found himself well settled in his protectorship, he began to undermine the sectarians, of whom Mr. Harrison was the chief; and though Cromwell had often spoke for the anabaptists, he designed now to settle himself in the people_s favour by suppressing them. Hereupon Mr. Harrison was by him made contemptible, who but yesterday thought himself not much below him." He was removed from his command in the army and his place in the senate, and committed a prisoner to Carisbrook Castle in the Isle of Wight.

We do not find that he had any command during the short period of Richard Cromwell_s government; but after the king was restored he was brought to trial as a regicide. On his trial he manifested great intrepidity and presence of mind, and great resignations to the will of God. Ludlow gives the following account of his trial.--"When Major General Harrison was required to answer, he not only pleaded not guilty, but justified the sentence passed upon the king, and the authority of those who had commissioned him to act as one

of his judges. He plainly told them, when witnesses were produced against him, that he came not thither with an intention to deny any thing he had done, but rather to bring it to light, owning his name to the warrant for executing the king to be written by himself, charging divers of those who sat on the bench as his judges to have been formerly as active for the cause in which he had been engaged as himself or any other person; affirming that he had not acted by any other motive than the principles of conscience and justice. In proof of this, he said, it was well known that he had chosen to be separated from his family, and to suffer a long imprisonment, rather than comply with those who had abused the power they had assumed to the oppression of the people. He insisted, that having done nothing in relation to the matter in question otherwise than by the authority of parliament, he was not justly accountable, either to this or any other inferior court; which being a point of law, he desired to have counsel assigned him upon that head. But the court overruled; and by interrupting him frequently, and not permitting him to go on in his defence, they clearly manifested a resolution of gratifying the resentment of the court upon any terms. So that a hasty verdict was brought in against him; and the question being asked whether he had any thing to say why judgment should not pass, he only said, that since the court had refused to hear what was fit for him to speak in his own defence, he had no more to say. On this, Bridgman pronounced the sentence. That the inhumanity of these men may the better appear, I must not omit that the executioner in an ugly dress with a halter in his hand, was placed near the Major General, and confined there during the whole of his trial; which action I doubt whether it was ever equalled by the most barbarous nations. But having learned to condemn such baseness, after the sentence was pronounced against him, he said aloud as he was withdrawing from the court, that he had no reason to be ashamed of the cause in which he had been engaged." [Ludlow's *Memoirs*, vol. iii. p. 63.]

"On Saturday, Oct. 13, 1660," says the account, "he was drawn on a hurdle from Newgate to the place called Charing Cross. Within certain rails lately there made, a gibbet was erected, and he was hanged with his face looking towards the banqueting house at Whitehall, the place where our late sovereign of eternal memory was sacrificed. Being half dead, he was cut down by the common executioner: his bowels were burned, his head severed from his body, and his body divided into quarters, which were returned back to Newgate on the same hurdle that carried it. His head is since set upon a pole on the top of the south-east end of Westminster hall looking towards London: the quarters of his body are in like manner exposed upon some of the city gates." [*Trials of the Regicides*, p. 282.]

His behaviour at his execution was bold and resolute. He declared at the gibbet, "that he was fully persuaded that what he had done was the cause and work of God, which he was confident God would own and raise up again, how much soever it suffered at that time. He went through all the indignities and severities of his sufferings with a calmness, or rather cheerfulness, that astonished the spectators. He was turned off, and cut down alive; for after his body was opened, he raised himself up, and struck the executioner on the head!" [Neal, vol. iv. p. 305.]

Bishop Burnett says, "The trials and executions of the first that suffered were attended by vast crowds of people. All men seemed pleased at the sight; but the firmness and shew of piety in the sufferers, who went out of the world with a sort of triumph in the cause for which they suffered, turned the minds of the populace, insomuch that the king was advised to proceed no further.

It would be difficult at this period to give a perfect representation of Mr. Harrison's character. In the Memoirs of Col. Hutchinson lately published, Mrs. Hutchinson speaks of Major General Harrison as having "a great interest both in the army and in the churches." She however represents him as destitute of the sincerity and simplicity of the christian character. Having mentioned the opposition made to a motion of the Colonel's in the house, she adds, "Of these, Major General Harrison was one; and he, when he saw he could not prevail, but that in favour particularly to Colonel Hutchinson it was carried out by his friends; after the rising of the house, meeting the Colonel, he embraced him, and desired him not to think he did it in any personal opposition to him, but in his judgment, who thought it fit the spoil should be taken out of the enemies hands, and no composition be admitted from idolators. Whatever might be of particular advantage to him he envied not, but rejoiced in; only he so dearly loved him that he desired he would not set his heart on augmenting of outward estate, but upon the things of the approaching kingdom of God, concerning which he made a most pious and seemingly friendly harangue of at least an hour long, with all the demonstrations of zeal to God and love to the Colonel that can be imagined. But the Colonel having reason to fear that he knew not his own spirit herein, made him only a short reply, that he thanked him for his counsel and should endeavour to follow it as became the duty of a Christian, and should be glad to be as effectually instructed by his example as his admonition. For at that time the major general, who was but a mean man's son, of a mean education and no estate before the war, had gathered on estate of two thousand a year, besides engrossing great offices and encroaching upon his under officers, and maintained his coach and family at a height as if they had been born to principality.

"About the same time a great ambassador was to have public audience in the house. He came from the king of Spain, and was the first who addressed them owning them a republic. The day before his audience Colonel Hutchinson was seated in the house near some young men handsomely clad; among them was Mr. Charles Rich, since Earl of Warwick, and the Colonel himself had on that day a habit which was pretty rich but grave, and no other than what he usually wore. Harrison addressing himself particularly to him, admonished them all that now the nations sent to them, they should labour to shine before them in wisdom, piety, righteousness and justice, and not in gold and silver and worldly bravery, which did not become saints; and the next day when the ambassador came, they should not set themselves out in gorgeous habits, which were unsuitable to holy professors. The Colonel, although he was not convinced of any misbecoming bravery in the suit he wore that day, which was but a sad coloured cloth trimmed with gold and silver points and buttons, yet because he would not appear offensive in the eyes of

religious persons, the next day he went in a plain black suit, and so did all the other gentlemen. But Harrison came that day in a scarlet coat and cloak, both laden with gold and silver lace, and the coat so covered with clinquant that scarcely could any one discern the ground; and in this glittering habit set himself just under the speaker's chair, which made the other gentlemen think that his godly speeches the day before were but made that he alone might appear in the eyes of strangers. But this was part of his weakness: the Lord at last lifted him up above these poor earthly elevations, which then and some time after provided against him."

[Memoirs of Col. Hutchinson, last edit. pp. 317-319.]

Mr. Baxter says, "Harrison was for Anabaptism and Antinomianism. He would not dispute with me at all but would in good discourse very fluently pour out himself in the extolling of free grace, which was savoury to those who had right principles, though he had some misunderstandings of free grace himself. He was a man of excellent natural parts for affection and oratory, but not well seen in the principles of his religion. He was of a sanguine complexion, naturally of such vivacity, hilarity, and alacrity, as another man hath when he hath drunken a cup too much; but naturally also so far from humble thoughts of himself that it was his ruin."

In the memoirs of Ludlow there is a good account of Mr. Harrison. Ludlow evidently considered him a person of great piety and eminent courage. He entered early into the parliament's cause, and was much devoted to the interests of a republican government. This led him to oppose Cromwell, for which he was sent a prisoner to Carisbrook Castle in the Isle of Wight; from whence he was some time afterwards brought by Major Strange to his own house at Highgate. A conference which Lieutenant General Ludlow had with him there is so interesting that we transcribe it at tending to develop the principles of those who were of the fifth-monarchy sentiments.

"When I was acquainted with his arrival (says Ludlow) I went to make him a visit; and having told him that I was very desirous to be informed by him of the reasons that moved him to join with Cromwell in the interruption of the civil authority; he answered that he had done it because he was persuaded they had not a heart to do any more good for the Lord and his people. Then said I, are you not now convinced of your error in entertaining such thoughts, especially since it has been seen what use has been made of the usurped power? To which he replied, Upon their heads be the guilt who have made a wrong use of it: for my own part, my heart was upright and sincere in the thing. I answered, that I conceived it not to be sufficient in matters of so great importance to mankind, to have only good intentions and designs, unless there be also probable means of attaining those ends by the methods we are entering upon; and though it should be granted that the parliament was not inclined to make so full a reformation of things amiss as might be desired, yet I could not doubt but they would have done as much good for us as the nation was fitted to receive; and therefore that extraordinary means ought not to have been

used till it had been clearly evident that the ordinary had failed, especially since it could not but be manifest to every man who observed the state of our affairs, that upon the suppression of our civil authority the power would immediately devolve upon that person who had the greatest interest in the army. His second reason for joining with Cromwell was, because he pretended to own and savour a set of men who acted upon higher principles than those of civil liberty. I replied that I thought him mistaken in that also, since it had not appeared that he ever approved of any persons or things farther than he might make them subservient to his own ambitious designs; reminding him that the generality of the people who had engaged with us having acted upon no higher principles than those of civil liberty, and that they may be governed by their own consent, it could not be just to treat them in another manner upon any pretences whatsoever. The major general then cited a passage of the prophet Daniel, where it is said that the saints shall take the kingdom and possess it. To which he added another to the same effect, that the kingdom shall not be left to another people. I answered, that the same prophet says in another place, that the kingdom shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High; and that I conceived, if they should presume to take it before it was given, they would at the best be guilty of doing evil that good might come from it. For to deprive those of their right in the government who had contended for it equally with ourselves, were to do as we would not that others should do unto us. That such proceedings are not only unjust, but also impracticable, at least for the present; because we cannot perceive that the saints are clothed with such a spirit as those are required to be to whom the kingdom is promised; and therefore we may easily be deceived in judging who are fit for government, for many have taken upon them the form of saintship that they may be admitted to it, who yet have not acted suitably to their pretensions in the sight of God or men. In proof of which we need go no farther than to those very persons who had drawn him to assist them in their design of exalting themselves, under the specious pretence of exalting the kingdom of Christ.

He confessed himself not able to answer the arguments I had used, yet said he was not convinced that the texts of scripture quoted by him were not to be interpreted in the sense he had taken them, and therefore desired a farther conference with me at another time, when each of us might be accompanied with some friends to assist us in the clearing of this matter. I consented to his proposal, and so we parted; but from that time forward we had not an opportunity to discourse farther upon this subject." [Ludlow's Memoirs, vol. ii. p. 564, 565, 566.]

Ludlow says that when Mr. Harrison was seized, though he had notice of their intentions, he refused to withdraw himself from his house, accounting such an action to be a desertion of the cause which he had engaged. "But I shall not (continues he) take upon me to censure the conduct of the major general, not knowing what extraordinary impulse he might be under, or what effect his piety, courage, and virtue, had upon his mind in that

conjuncture. Sure I am, he was every way so qualified for the part he had in the following sufferings that even his enemies were astonished and confounded." [Ibid. p. 12.] While Mr. Harrison was in confinement there was published by some person not very friendly towards him a single sheet, entitled, A Declaration of Major General Harrison, prisoner in the tower of London; with his rules and precepts to all publick churches, and private congregations: and an answer thereto: also, the Resolution of the Fifty-Monarchy Men, Anabaptists, Quakers, and others. What is called his declaration is as follows. "Since the committing of Major General Harrison to the tower of London, divers of his friends and relations have had a conference with him, touching the grounds and motives of his actions. To which he declared, that he was thoroughly convinced of the justness of the cause he first engaged in; that he esteemed reading of the word of God on ordinance of God, both in private and in publick, but did not account reading to be preaching; that he esteemed that preaching best wherein there was most of God and least of man, when vain flourishes of wit and words were declined, and the demonstration of God's spirit and power studied; yet could he distinguish between purest plainness, and negligent rudeness: that he account perspicuity the best grace of a preacher, and that method best which was most helpful to understanding, affection, and memory; that he esteemed the Lord's-day a divine ordinance and rest on it necessary so far as conduced to holiness: that he was very conscientious in observing that day as the mart day of the soul: that he was very careful to remember it, to get house and heart in order for it, and when it came was studious to improve it: that he redeemed the morning from superfluous sleep, and watched the whole day over his thoughts and words not only to restrain them from wickedness but worldliness, and that all the parts of the day were alike holy to him, and his care was continued in it, in variety of holy duties: what he heard in publick he repeated in private, to whet it upon himself and family: which rules and precepts, he desired to be made practicable throughout all publick and private congregations, for the enlightening the dark corners of the earth, &c." [p. 3,4.]

In the pretended answer to this, though the design was certainly to degrade those who had been opposed to regal authority, it is gratifying to find that there is not any thing said against the conduct of Mr. Harrison as being at variance with his professions.

But he had unhappily imbibed, without knowing it, the erroneous popish sentiment, that dominion is founded in grace. Forgetting the declaration of the Saviour, "My kingdom is not of this world," he had formed the ridiculous design of setting up by the sword that kingdom which should never be moved. His zeal and courage made him a convenient person to introduce those to power whose ambition led them to assume the chief authority. Had he listened to the advice given to Peter, "Put up thy sword into its sheath," he would not have known the meaning of the concluding sentence in the way he did: All they that take the sword shall perish by the sword.

Though Major General Harrison was a Baptist at the time of his trial and execution; yet he was not at the period of the King's death. Anthony Wood says he was not baptized till the year 1657. And from Thurloe's State Papers it is certain that he did not join the Baptists till after he had been displaced from his command by Cromwell in 1653. So that there is no evidence of any Baptist being among the King's Judges. This is confirmed by

a letter written about the year 1670, by Captain Richard Deane to Dr. Barlow, Bishop of Lincoln, from which, as it contains considerable information concerning the Baptists in the time of Charles I. and their conduct in the state, we shall make the following extract:--

"My Lord,

"The ground of my humbly tendering these ensuing pages to your lordship, is your declared condescension to peruse any small treatise that should be presented to you concerning the proper subject and administration of baptism. That they may in your lordship's charity, so far as their conversation suits with their doctrine, be admitted among the number of sincere christians, I intend to bring to your remembrance some of their leaders, and the occasions which prepared the way for the increase of their numbers.

"About thirty-eight years since, in the heat of our late troubles, episcopacy being laid aside, and presbytery only as it were by way of experiment for a season attempted, but never in a national way prosecuted with effect, every man was at liberty to pursue the persuasions of his own mind, as to entering into church-fellowship in distinct congregations, and therein to join with such as he conceived came nearest to the primitive pattern in worship and discipline. About that time and a little after there were many ministers, some who had been before ordained, and others who had been admitted to parochial and other public charges. Among whom of my acquaintance were Mr. Tombes, sometime preacher at the temple; Mr. Christopher Blackwood in Kent, Mr. Benjamin Cox at Bedford, Mr. Edward Harrison, Mr. Daniel Dyke, and some others in or near Hertfordshire; Mr. Hansard Knollys, and many others who did openly profess and several of them write and publish their opinions concerning the proper subject and manner of baptism. Some of them voluntarily left their parochial charges and benefices, as not approving the baptizing of infants, and collected distinct congregations of such as agreed with them in this doctrine of baptism; which by a succession of ordained ministers in the places of such as are dead, remain to this day.

"In the year 1649, the Baptists greatly increased in the country, and their opinions did likewise spread themselves into some of the regiments of horse and foot in the army; and that in 1650 and afterwards, some professing this opinion were called from their private employments, and preferred to commands at sea. Among others, Captain Mildmay; to command the admiral flag ship, under the late Duke of Albemarle, when he was one of the generals at sea. Captain Pack, to command the flag ship under Sir George Ascue, rear admiral; Sir John Harman, to command the admiral flag ship under his royal highness the Duke of York.

"But notwithstanding some of this sect had that countenance given them as I have mentioned, by such as had the principal management of affairs; yet this sect in general, as they have published in their apologies, were the least of any sort of people concerned in any vicissitudes of government that happened among us. My station within the aforementioned ten years gave me opportunity to know most persons and actions of note, in reference as well to civil as martial affairs, and particularly those of this sect. And although in and after the year 1649, their numbers did increase, insomuch that the principal officers in divers regiments of horse and foot became Anabaptists, particularly in Oliver Cromwell_s own regiment of horse when he was captain general of all the parliament_s forces, and in the Duke of Albemarle_s own regiment of foot when he was general of all the English forces in Scotland; yet by the best information I could have, there were not at any time before the year 1649, twenty Anabaptists in any sort of command in the whole army; and until after the year 1649, there were no more than two, viz. Mr. Lawrence, and Mr. John Fiennes, one of the Lord Say_s sons, who made profession of this opinion, chosen into the commons house of parliament, and both these did in that year and in the lifetime of King Charles I., as I have been credibly informed, voluntarily departed from that parliament, as not approving their proceedings against the person of the king, and sat no more in it, but lived privately until about six years afterwards. A new form of government being then formed and in appearance settled, Mr. Lawrence was again called into public employment.

"I confess to your lordship, I never heard of any Anabaptist in the King_s army during the contest between his majesty and the parliament: and perhaps, because there were some in the parliament_s army and none in the king_s army, some persons have from thence taken occasion to affirm that the opinion of Anabaptism in the church is opposite to monarchy in the state. It is true, as before is mentioned, that this opinion was no general bar to the continuance of such as did embrace it in public employments, though I have cause to believe that one special reason of disbanding one entire regiment in the Early of Essex_s army was because the Colonel entertained and gave countenance to Separatists and some Anabaptists. And that which occasioned Oliver Cromwell, after he usurped the government of lord protector, to discharge at once all the principal officers of his own regiments upon other pretences was for that they were all Anabaptists." [Crosby, vol. ii. Preface, p. 2-5.]

This letter is highly creditable to the Baptists, as it goes to prove that they disapproved of the execution of the king, and were adverse to the usurpation of Cromwell.

Another person of eminence among the Baptists was Colonel Hutchinson. He was one of the king_s judges, and governor of Nottingham during the time of the civil wars. In the field and in the senate he distinguished himself as a person of great courage, judgment,

piety, and liberality. The occasion of his embracing the sentiments of the Baptists was very extraordinary, and is related with all that simplicity and good sense which characterize the whole of that inestimable work.

"At Nottingham they had gotten a very able minister into the great church, but a bitter presbyterian. Him and his brethren, my Lady Fairfax caressed with so much kindness that they grew impudent to preach up their faction openly in the pulpit, and to revile the others, and at length they would not suffer any of the army chaplains to preach in the town. They then coming to the governor and complaining of their unkind usage, he invited them to come and preach in his house, which when it was known they did there was a great concourse of people came thither to them; and the presbyterians when they heard it were maddened with rage, not only against them but against the governor, who accidentally gave them another occasion about the same time. When formerly the Presbyterian ministers forced him for quietness sake to go and break up a private meeting in the cannoniers chamber, there were found some notes concerning paedobaptism, which being brought into the governor's lodgings, his wife having then more leisure to read than he, having perused and compared them with the scriptures, found not what to say against the truths they asserted concerning the misapplication of that ordinance to infants: but being then young and modest, she thought it a kind of virtue to submit to the judgment and practice of most churches rather than defend a singular opinion of her own, she not being then enlightened in that great mistake of the national churches. But in this year she happened to be with child, communicated her doubts to her husband and desired him to endeavour to her satisfaction; and while he did, he himself became as unsatisfied, or rather satisfied against it. First therefore, he diligently searched the scriptures alone, and could find in them no ground at all for this practice. Then he bought and read all the treatises on both sides, which at that time came thick from the presses, and still was cleared in the error of the pedobaptists. After this, his wife being brought to bed, that he might if possible give the religious party no offence, he invited all the ministers to dinner, and propounded his doubt and the ground thereof to them. None of them could defend their practice with any satisfactory reason, but the tradition of the church from the primitive times, and their main buckler of federal holiness, which Tombes and Denne had excellently overthrown. He and his wife then professing themselves unsatisfied in the practice, desired their opinions what they ought to do. Most answered, to conform to the general practice of other christians, how dark soever it were to themselves; but Mr. Foxcraft, one of the assembly, said that except they were convinced of the warrant of that practice from the word, they sinned in doing it; whereupon that infant was not baptized. And now the governor and his wife, notwithstanding that they forsook not their assemblies nor retracted their benevolences and civilities and Anabaptists, and often glanced at in their public sermons. Not only the ministers, but all their

zealous sectaries conceived implacable malice against them on that account, which was carried on with a spirit of envy and persecution to the last; though he on his side might well have said to them, as his Master to the old pharisees, "Many good works have I done among you; for which of these do ye hate me?" Yet the generality even of that people had a secret conviction upon them that he had been faithful to them and deserved their love; and in spite of their own bitter zeal, they could not but have a reverent esteem for him whom they often railed at for not thinking and speaking according to their opinions." [Ed. 2. 271,272.]

The editor of this admirable work, who is a clergyman of the established church, has remarked in a note, "Surely this shows an unbecoming propensity to speculate in religion; the story is however told with candour." It is rather wonderful that such an observation should have been made by a gentleman who appears in general to think correctly and to write with liberality. When speaking of their patriotism he says, he is "more proud of it than if he could count among his ancestors the most illustrious of traitors!" [p. 178. Note.] But they were by what he calls their unwarrantable propensity to speculate in religion, led to embrace the principles of the Baptists.

Soon after the Restoration the celebrated John Bunyan felt the weight of persecution. He had now been a preacher of the gospel about five years, and was exceedingly popular, though he still followed his business as a travelling tinker. The circumstances attending this event are related by himself in an "account of his imprisonment, &c." It appears that as he was preaching at a village called Samsell by Harlington, in Bedfordshire, Nov. 12, 1660, he was interrupted by a constable, and obliged to desist. This was at the instance of Mr. Francis Wingate, a justice of the peace, who had issued a warrant for his apprehension. This was done it seems principally for the purpose of intimidation, as Mr. Bunyan says, that "had he been minded to play the coward, he could have escaped and kept out of their hands." But concluding that his manifesting fear would have a bad effect on the minds of other ministers and Christians, he resolved to bear the brunt, "seeing God of his mercy would choose me (says he) to go upon the forlorn hope in this country; that is, to be the first who should be opposed for the gospel." It is likely from this that he was one of the first ministers, whose courage and faithfulness were put to the test; nor could the trial have fallen on a person more eminently qualified to resist the oppressions of arbitrary power in matters of conscience.

The next morning he was taken before the justice, who asked the constable what the people did who were assembled together, and what they had with them. Mr. Bunyan understood him as intending to inquire whether they had any arms and ammunition. When the constable told him there were only a few persons who met to worship God, the justice was evidently embarrassed; but told Mr. Bunyan that what he did was against the law, and that he was resolved to break the neck of such meetings; and that if he could not find sureties, he would certainly send him to prison.

Mr. Bunyan soon procured sureties, who were told that "they were bound to keep him from preaching; and that if he did preach, their bonds would be forfeited." To which, says

Mr. Bunyan, I answered, "that then I should break them; for I should not leave speaking the word of God." His mittimus was accordingly made out, and he was committed to the custody of the constable to be conveyed to Bedford jail.

In the way thither they were met by two of his brethren, who desired the constable to stay while they endeavoured through the influence of a professed friend to prevail on the magistrate for his release. After much conversation he agreed that if he would come to him again, and "say some certain words to him, he should be released." When Mr. Bunyan was told this, he replied, "if the words were such as he could utter with a good conscience, he should; otherwise he should not." It was now proposed to him that if he would promise not to call the people together any more, he should have his liberty; which was explained to mean, that he should not preach to a body of people collected for the purpose of hearing him. To this he would not agree; and when the justice found he was at a point, and would not be persuaded, he again ordered him to be sent to prison.

After he had been in jail five or six days, his friends again attempted to get him out by obtaining bondsmen; for his mittimus expressed that he should lie there till he could obtain sureties. They accordingly applied to a Mr. Crompton, a justice at Elstow, the village where Mr. Bunyan resided. But he refused to interfere, fearing he said that there was more against him than was expressed in the mittimus; so that he returned again to prison.

About seven weeks after, he was brought to trial at the quarter sessions held at Bedford in January 1661. A bill of indictment was preferred against him to the following effect: "That John Bunyan of the town of Bedford, labourer, being a person of such and such conditions, hath since such a time devilishly and perniciously abstained from coming to church to hear divine service, and is a common upholder of several unlawful meetings and conventicles, to the great disturbance and destruction of the good subjects of this kingdom, contrary to the laws of our sovereign lord the king, &c."

After a great deal of conversation with the justices, in which he displayed great fortitude and presence of mind, Justice Keeling addressing him said, "Then you confess the indictment, do you not." Till now, Mr. Bunyan appears to have considered this conversation as merely an examination, and did not know that he was put on his trial, knowing nothing of the indictment. He therefore replied, "This I confess, we have had many meetings together, both to pray to God and exhort one another, and we had the sweet comforting presence of the Lord amongst us for our encouragement, blessed be his name! Therefore I confess myself guilty, and no otherwise."

On this pretended confession of his crime, without producing any witnesses to substantiate the charges against him, Justice Keeling proceeded to pass judgment upon him, which was to the following effect. "You must be had back again to prison, and there lie for three months following; and at three months end, if you do not submit and go to church to hear divine service, and leave your preaching, you must be banished the realm: and if after such a day as shall be appointed you to be gone, you shall be found in this realm, you must stretch by the neck for it, I tell you plainly." He then ordered the jailer to

take him away. To this Mr. Bunyan replied, "As to that matter, I am at a point; for if I were out of prison today, I would preach the gospel again tomorrow, by the help of God."

Perhaps the reader may wish to know upon what law of the land this commitment was founded. Let it be recollected then, that on the restoration of the king all the acts which had been passed during the period of the civil wars were declared null and void; consequently it was inferred that all the acts in existence before this time were still in force. In the reign of Elizabeth an act was passed to suppress the increase of the puritans, which enacted that "if any person above the age of sixteen years who shall obstinately refuse to repair to some church, chapel, or usual place of common prayer, to hear divine service, and shall forbear the same for the space of a month after without any lawful cause, or shall by preaching, writing, or express words or speeches advisedly and purposely practise and go about to persuade any person to deny, withstand, or impugn her majesty's power and authority in causes ecclesiastical, united and annexed to the civil power of this realm; or to that end and purpose shall advisedly and maliciously move any person to forbear or abstain from coming to church to hear divine service, or to receive the communion, or to be present at any unlawful assemblies, conventicles and meetings, under colour or pretence of any such exercise of religion; he shall be committed to prison until he shall conform and go to church, and make submission as hereafter is expressed." [Burn's Eccles. Law, vol. ii. p. 117.]

This obsolete law, which it is probable most persons were ignorant of, seeing it had not been acted upon since the reign of Elizabeth, was now made the pretext for renewing the persecution against dissenters at a time when no notice had been taken of their meetings by the legislative body, and while the king's declaration at Breda was still warm, namely, "We do declare a liberty to tender consciences, and that no man shall be disquieted or called in question for differences in opinion in matters of religion which do not disturb the peace of the kingdom."

About three months afterwards, Mr. Cobb, the town clerk of Bedford, was sent by the justices to admonish Bunyan, and demand his submission to the church of England. In this conference Bunyan told him that he did not conceive that the law by which he was committed to prison reached his case, as it was made to prevent the assembling of those who designing to do evil at their meetings made religion their pretence to cover their wickedness: or as the act expresses, "under colour or pretence of any exercise of religion, &c." There can be no doubt however but the law was made to prevent the meetings of the puritans in private houses, which was not admitted by the high church party to be any exercise of religion in reality, but merely in pretence.

In reply, Mr. Cobb mentioned Venner's insurrection which we shall presently relate, and which had just now happened. "Every one will say as you do (said Cobb) under what glorious pretences they went; and yet indeed they intended no less than the ruin of the common wealth." To this Mr. Bunyan answered, "That practice of theirs I abhor; yet it does not follow that because they did so, therefore all others will do so. I look upon it as my duty to behave myself under the king's government both as it becomes a man and a christian; and if occasion were offered me, I would willingly manifest my loyalty to my

prince both by word and deed." When Mr. Cobb pressed his compliance by the authority of the king, Bunyan replied that in all civil matters he certainly should submit to the powers that were; but in matters of conscience, says he, "The law hath provided two ways of obeying; the one to do that which I in my conscience do believe I am bound to do actively; and where I cannot obey actively, there I am willing to lie down and suffer what they shall do to me." This put an end to the conversation.

A few weeks afterwards, April 23, Charles II. was crowned, and a great many prisoners were released, indeed all who had been committed on account of religion since his return, a general pardon being granted. But the enemies of Bunyan contrived to prevent his sharing in this favour by saying, that as he was a convicted person, he must sue out his pardon. This he refused to do, as it would have been a tacit acknowledgement of guilt, which he could not conscientiously admit. As however the king's proclamation allowed twelve months for any to petition for a pardon, they could not then carry the sentence of banishment into execution.

He was kept in prison notwithstanding, and when the assizes were held in August, he presented a petition to the judges three times by the hands of his wife, that they would impartially take his case into consideration. The poor woman was treated kindly, and indeed affectionately, by Judge Hale, but with great severity by Judge Twisden who was on the circuit with him. This unjust judge said, "What, do you think we can do as we list? Your husband is a breaker of the peace, and is convicted by the law." This she resolutely denied, by saying, "It was but a word of discourse which they took for a conviction;" and added, "I was a while since at London to see if I could get my husband's liberty, and then I spoke with my Lord Barkwood, one of the house of lords, to whom I delivered a petition, and who presented it to the house of lords for my husband's releasement. They told me they could not do it, but had committed it to the judges at the next assizes. This he told me; and now I am come to you to see if any thing can be done in this business, and you give neither releasement or relief." After some farther conversation; Judge Hale answered very mildly, "I tell thee, woman, seeing it is so that they have taken what thy husband spoke for a conviction, then must either apply thyself to the king, or sue out his pardon, or get a writ of error."

By this it should seem that Lord Hale thought they had not legally convicted him, as he repeated his intimation by saying, "a writ of error will be cheapest." His endeavours to serve Bunyan were however unavailing, for he was still left in prison.

Probably those circumstances induced the jailer to allow him the liberty of going abroad to preach as usual, and it is not unlikely but the magistrates were afraid of a prosecution for false imprisonment. However this was, it is certain he visited all his old friends in the country, and "exhorted them to be steadfast in the faith of Christ, and to take heed that they touched not the common-prayer book, &c., but to mind the word of God which giveth directions to christians in every point." He also visited his christian friends in London; but his enemies hearing of it, threatened to indict the jailor, and had nearly succeeded in getting him out of his place. After this, Bunyan was so straitened that for seven years he could not look out of the door of his prison. All attempts to procure his

release totally failed, and he was detained a prisoner till the year 1672, when he was discharged by means of Dr. Barlow, who received an order from the lord chancellor. This treatment of Mr. Bunyan was but a sample of the usage which was experienced by dissenters in every part of the land.

The circumstance alluded to which furnished the government with a pretext for rigorous measures against the dissenters was Venner's insurrection. This is related by Rapin as follows.

"The year 1661 was ushered in by an extraordinary event which gave the court a pretence for breaking through the declaration of indulgence which had been published. This was an insurrection of some fifth-monarchy men who believed themselves bound in conscience to use their utmost endeavours to advance the kingdom of Christ upon earth. On the sixth of January, while the king was attending the queen mother and the princess his sister on their return to France, about fifty of these men, under the conduct of one Thomas Venner, assembled in the evening in St. Paul's church yard, and killed a man who upon demand had answered, For God and the King. This giving an alarm to the city, some trained bands were sent against them, whom these men quickly routed and then marched through several streets, and at last retired to Cane Wood between Highgate and Hampstead; from whence a part of horse and foot sent against them by General Monk dislodged them, and took some prisoners. But this did not prevent the rest from returning to the city, where they fought furiously, till they were obliged to take sanctuary in a house. They then defended themselves like men fearless of death, or rather as secure from all danger under the protection of Jesus Christ. Here it was that Venner, being wounded, and twenty of his men killed, with as many of the assailants, was taken with the rest of his fellows. A few days after, they were all tried, condemned, and executed, without any confession of guilt, and persisting in their extravagancies to the last. Two young men only shewed some signs of repentance." [Rapin, *History of England*, vol. ii. p. 623.]

The king took occasion from this insurrection to publish a proclamation forbidding all meetings and conventicles under pretence of religion, and commanding the oath of allegiance and supremacy to be tendered to all persons disaffected to the government; and in case of refusal, they were to be prosecuted. The consequences was that numbers of Baptists and other dissenters were imprisoned, and their meetings every where disturbed.

The Baptists soon after presented an address to the king, disavowing all knowledge of this mad affair, and expressing their disapprobation of it. This is preserved in a work published by Mr. Thomas Grantham, entitled, *Christianismus Primitivus*, and is as follows:--

"The humble apology of some commonly called Anabaptists in behalf of themselves and others of the same judgment with them; with their

protestation against the late wicked and most horrid, treasonable, insurrection and rebellion acted in the city of London; together with an apology formerly presented to the king's most excellent majesty.

"We should be stupid and senseless, if we did not deeply resent those black obloquies and reproaches cast upon those of our profession and practice in the point of baptism, by occasion of the late most horrid treason and rebellion in this city of London.--We most sadly see and feel that among many it is become enough to render any man criminal to be called an Anabaptist, or at least a ground sufficient to question his loyalty and fidelity to the king's majesty. We may not therefore be so negligent of our duty to God in respect of our profession, or unto ourselves and families, as silently to suffer our names and profession to be buried under such causeless infamy. Neither may we be so much wanting in our duty to our king as by such sullen silence to offer his majesty just occasion of being jealous and suspicious of our loyalty and obedience; or to leave him without all possible rational security of our humble subjection and fidelity to him.

"We acknowledge that the histories of Germany relate most dreadful things of the impious opinions and practices of some reputed Anabaptists, destructive to all government and human society. Although it is to be observed what Cassander, a learned and moderate papist relates, in his epistle to the Duke of Gulick and Cleve, to this purpose; that there were certain people in Germany bearing the name of Anabaptists who resisted and opposed the opinions and practices of those at Munster, and taught the contrary doctrine; whereby in his opinion they appeared to be incited by a godly mind, and rendered themselves rather worthy of pity than of persecution and perdition. And that in Holland those who have succeeded them do in doctrine and practice adhere to the same peaceable principles, is publicly known. But the misguided zeal of some otherwise minded in the point of baptism, hath frequently though unduly imputed the like impious opinions, designs, and intentions, unto all that are called by that name; although their souls abhor the very memory of such impious doctrines, and their bloody consequences. That such evil opinions and practices are no natural or necessary consequence of the doctrine of baptism, nor of any possible connexion with it, is easily to be discerned: yet by the like mistake we now suffer under jealousies, through the wicked treason, rebellion, and murder, of a few heady and distempered persons; pretending to introduce a civil and temporal reign and government of Jesus Christ by their swords, and to subvert all civil government and authority. Yet we cannot imagine a reason why their bloody tenets and tragical actions should reflect on those of our persuasion, *the persons not being of our belief or practice about baptism*. But to the best of our information they were all, except one, asserters of infant baptism, and never had a communion with us in our assemblies, nor hath there been any

correspondence or converse between us: but contrariwise, in their meetings they have inveighed bitterly against us as worshippers of the beast, because of our constantly declaring against their conceited wild interpretations of dark prophecies, and enthusiastical impulses, and professing and practising our duty of subjection to the civil magistracy.

"And it is as notoriously known that the very same persons, or at least the leaders and the most of them, formerly advanced their pretended standard of Jesus Christ as much against us as against any others. And it is as publicly known that even in this their rebellion, such of us as were called thereunto, which were many, were ready to hazard our lives to suppress them. And if such a constant continued opposition unto the impious tenets and practices of these persons, both in our doctrine and lives, will not be esteemed a pregnant and cogent evidence of our unspotted innocence from their treason and rebellion, and satisfy every man that our souls never entered into their secrets, we can only appeal to the all-seeing God, the Judge of all the earth, to vindicate us in his righteous judgment, who we are assured will judge and do right. In whose presence we protest that we neither had the least foreknowledge of the said late treasonable insurrection, nor did any of us in any kind of degree whatsoever, directly or indirectly, contrive, promote, assist, abet, or approve the same; but do esteem it our duty to God, to his majesty, and to our neighbour, not only to be obedient, but also to use our utmost industry to prevent all such treasons, murders, and rebellions, and to use in all our assemblies constant prayers and supplications for his majesty.

"Wherefore we humbly beseech his majesty, and desire all our fellow subjects that our actions, doctrines, and lives, may be the only glasses through which they will look into our hearts, and pass judgment upon us; and that the tenets or opinions of others, either in this or foreign kingdom, may not be imputed to us, when our doctrines and lives do declare our abhorrence of them. We believing that Jesus Christ himself, his apostles and Christian religion do consist with and obey the imperial government that then was in the world; and that we ought to obey his majesty not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake.

"We desire therefore that it may be considered without prejudice, Whether our persuasion in the matter of baptism hath any connexion with these doctrines against government? Or whether these can be the probable consequences or inferences from our doctrine concerning baptism? And we pray that it may be seriously considered whether it be rational, just, or christian, to impute all the errors and wickednesses of any sect of christians in one age or country to the persons of another age and country, called by the name of the former? Especially when these errors or impieties gave not the name to the sect, as in our case, nor can be

reasonably supposed to be the consequences of that opinion from whence the sect had its denomination.

"It would not be held just to aver every protestant to believe consubstantion, or absolute predestination and reprobation, because Luther was zealous in the one, and Calvin in the other. Why therefore should the errors and impieties of others be imputed to us, whilst we earnestly contend against them? And as to our doctrine of baptism, we hope every christian that hath searched the scriptures knoweth that there wants not so much evidence at least for our opinion and practice, as christian charity may well allow, although in some men_s judgments we should be esteemed mistaken. It will easily be granted by the learned that there is no impiety in our doctrine of baptism, nor opposition to civil government, or his majesty_s authority; neither can the injury of our neighbour be the natural consequence of it.

"Therefore we humbly hope that the omnipotent power of heaven and earth will so dispose his majesty and his people_s hearts, that we may worship God in peace and freedom according to the faith we have received, living a peaceable and quiet life in all godliness and honesty.

P.S. "That it may yet more fully appear, that our principles suggested in this apology about subjection to magistracy and government against the contrary opinions and practices are not new, much less proceeding from us upon the unsuccessfulness of this tragical enterprise, we have thought fit herewith to publish an apology of our ancient and constant principles, presented with our humble petition to the king_s most excellent majesty, some months since, in the year 1660.

"WILLIAM KIFFIN, JOHN BATTY, THOMAS COOPER, JOHN PEARSON, HENRY HILLS, EDWARD HARRISON, SAMUEL TULL, JOHN COX, JAMES KNIGHT, CHR. BLACKWOOD, HENRY DEN, THOMAS LAMB, PHILIP TRAVORS, THOMAS PENSON, FRANCIS SMITH, JOHN GOSNOLD, THOMAS BROMHALL, SAMUEL STANSON, JOHN BROWNING, THOMAS LATHWEL, EDWARD ROBERTS, JOHN MAN, Z. WORTH, JOHN SPILSBURY, JER. ZANCHY, JOS. SIMPSON, JOHN RIX, JOHN CLANTON, DANIEL ROYSE, MARK CAM." [*Christianis Primitivus*, ook iii. chap. i. p. 9]

These signatures are those of the Particular Baptist ministers, and some of the principal members of their congregations. The other apology, presented a few months before on the return of the king, contains principles exactly similar, and in that they had referred to their confession of faith of the seven churches in London, printed in the several years of 1651, 1646, 1644. Also to a "declaration concerning a public dispute," printed in 1645: likewise a "declaration by the several congregational societies in and about the city of London, in a way of vindication of themselves, touching liberty, magistracy, &c.,"

printed in 1647. Also a "declaration of divers elders and brethren of congregational societies in and about the city of London, Nov. 10, 1651." And the "declaration of several of the people called Anabaptists in and about the city of London, Dec. 12, 1659, the answer to the first crimination." [We have not seen any of these declarations. The last mentioned was doubtless that presented to the parliament by Mr. Barebone, mentioned by Lord Clarendon. vol. ii. p. 556.] Crosby informs us that he found written at the end of these printed apologies, the following declaration.

"Mr. Jessey preaching soon after, declared to his congregation that Venner should say, he believed there was not one Baptist among them; and that if they succeeded, the Baptists should know that infant baptism was an ordinance of Jesus Christ. Mr. Gravener was present at Venner_s meeting-house in Coleman street, and heard him say this; from whose mouth, (says the writer,) I had this account."

The Baptists and other dissenters not only protested publicly against Venner_s insurrection, but made an appeal to the several confessions of faith they had published, in which they had avowed their sentiments respecting magistracy and the duties they owed to civil governors. But notwithstanding there was no ground of suspicion which could attach to them, yet vast numbers of them both in the city and in the country were imprisoned, and their places of worship every where interrupted.

About this time was published an address to the king, the parliament, and the people, entitled, Sion_s groans for her distressed; or sober endeavours to prevent innocent blood, &c. This bears date March 8, 1661, and is signed by Thomas Monck, William Jeffery, William Reynolds, Joseph Wright, Francis Stanley, Fancis Smith, and George Hammon.

Two of these persons, George Hammon and William Jeffery, the former a minister at Canterbury, and the other at Seven Oaks in Kent, with many others, were prisoners in Maidstone jail. While there they published a work entitled, *The humble petition, and representation of the sufferings of several peaceable and innocent subjects, called by the name of Anabaptists, inhabitants of the county of Kent, and prisoners in the jail of Maidstone for the testimony of a good conscience.* This was as follows:--

"To his Majesty Charles II. King of England, Scotland, France, and Ireland, and the dominions thereunto belonging.

"May it please your Majesty,

"Forasmuch as by authority derived from yourself, several of us your subjects, inhabitants in the county of Kent, are now imprisoned; it therefore much concerns thee, oh king, to hear what account we give of our distressed condition. Thou hast already seen our confession of faith, wherein our peaceable resolutions were declared. We have not violated any part thereof, that should cause that liberty promised from Breda to be withdrawn. And now for our principles that most particularly relate to

magistrates and government, we have with all clearness laid them before thee; humbly beseeching they may be read patiently, and what we say weighed in the balance of the sanctuary, and then judge how worthy we are of bonds and imprisonment. And this we the more earnestly desire, because not only our own lives are in danger, but also an irresistible destruction cometh on our wives and little ones by that violence which is now exercised on us. Disdain not our plainness in speaking, seeing the great God accepts of the like. And now, oh king, that all thy proceedings, both towards us and all men, may be such as may be pleasing to the eternal God, in whose hands thy and our breath is, who ere long will judge both quick and dead according to their works, is the prayer of thy faithful subjects and servants."

After stating their sentiments respecting the king's authority, they conclude with an earnest supplication that they may have liberty to worship God; and it is signed in the name of the Baptists now prisoners in the jail of Maidstone, by WILLIAM JEFFERY, GEORGE HAMMON, JOHN REEVE, JAMES BLACKMORE.

A very similar address was presented to the king by several Baptists who were imprisoned at Dover. The magistrates here were very severe; and after harassing them a great deal, sent then of them to prison, where they were kept for a considerable time. Amongst these it is supposed was Mr. Samuel Taverner, who had been Governor of Dover Castle, but was now a Baptist minister.

In this year there was a small piece published by Mr. John Griffith, a general Baptist minister in London, entitled *a complaint of the oppressed against oppressors; or the unjust and arbitrary proceedings of some soldiers and justices against some sober godly persons in and near London*, in which he complains of the persecution of many godly persons to whose characters their adversaries could not impute the least spot of infamy; of their being seized, and taken out of their beds at midnight, by soldiers with drawn swords, without any warrant from a justice of the peace; of others being taken in their religious assemblies, the doors of which were open that all might hear what they said, and see what they did; and of others being assaulted by soldiers whilst they were passing along the streets about their lawful employments, and carried without a warrant before justices who acted in a manner unworthy of the office which they sustained.

When the laws themselves were cruel, and the violence of magistrates went beyond them, the sufferings of Christian must have been great. No redress was to be obtained but by an appeal to the king, of which we have many instances. Amongst others Mr. John Sturgion, a Baptist, in the year 1662 published a tract which he entitled *a plea for toleration of opinions and persuasions in matters of religion, differing from the church of England; humbly presented to the king's most excellent majesty*. The introduction is as follows:--

"May it please your Majesty,

"I have had strong impulses upon my mind for some days, to present this paper to your majesty; and I humbly hope it will not be made to suffer much under an evil resentment upon its presentation to your hand, because it bears a testimony of the author_s good affection to your royal self. For my witness is on high, that I did not write this paper because I love you not, because I honour you not, because I own you not in your royal capacity of magistracy and civil power. God knoweth that you have not any subject more Christianly real or cordial unto you. I humbly beg that your majesty would be pleased so far to deny yourself as to read it with patience, and judge of it as you shall see cause."

After some reasonings with his majesty respecting the prohibition of all meetings whatsoever, he thus proceeds--"And may it farther please your majesty to consider your afflicted and innocent subjects, how they have been haled from their peaceable habitations, and thrust into prisons, almost in all counties in England. Many are still detained to the undoing of themselves and families; and most of them are poor men whose livelihood, under God, depends upon the labour of their own hands. So that they lie under more than an ordinary calamity, there being so many thrust into little rooms together that they are an annoyance to each other, especially in the city of London, where the lord mayor crowds them very close together; that it hath been observed, the keepers have complained they have had too many guests; and whilst they suffer there, some of their wives and tender babes want bread at home."

After giving several reasons why the magistrates should use no restraint or force in matters of religion, he says, "Now if your majesty will be consider what it is that the *baptized people* and divers others have made such earnest suit to your majesty for: it is not for titles of honour, nor for places of profit, either in a civil or ecclesiastical capacity; but only this is their request and humble desire, That we may serve the Lord without molestation in that faith and order which we have learned in the holy scriptures; giving honour to our King to whom honour belongs, fear to whom fear, tribute to whom tribute belongs; in every thing as far as we have abilities, to render to God the things that are God_s, and to the magistrate the things that are his."

Instead of any relief being afforded, the persecution at this time very much increased in consequence of some report of a plot which was said to endanger the government. The meetings of the dissenters were broken up throughout the city, and such as were found assembling were put into prison. Among these were Dr. John Griffith, author of the work before mentioned, entitled *The complaint of the oppressed &c.*," who was apprehended and committed to Newgate, where he lay seventeen months for no other crime than that of preaching to a congregation of protestant dissenters.

This storm was not confined to the city, but extended to different parts of the country; and in many places very great opposition was made to the Baptists, who appear to have been the sect every where spoken against. These sufferings produced a pamphlet, entitled, *Behold a cry; or a true relation of the inhuman and violent outrages of divers soldiers, constables, and others, practised upon many of the Lord_s people, commonly*

though falsely called Anabaptists, at their several meetings in and about London. It is thus introduced: "The sundry and divers abuses that have been offered time after time to the free-born people of England, contrary to Magna Charta and the Petition of right, and all the known laws of the land, with the declaration and proclamation of the king that now is, we cannot suppose the nation wholly ignorant of it. But it is known how inhumanly they have been used, and with what violence soldiers and others have proceeded in several places where they have in the fear of the Lord been assembled! their usual manner being to come with soldiers, which commonly were rude youths or mercenary men, with their swords drawn, to the affrighting of women and children, breaking and spoiling their goods, doing violence to their persons by pulling, haling, and beating them.

"Now that all, both magistrates and people, may be rightly informed, the mouth of falsehood and scandal stopped, and such abuses redressed, we shall in particular give a brief hint of some of them as follows.

"In June 1661, there came divers rude soldiers, wicked swearing and debauched persons to the meeting-house in Brick-lane near Whitechapel, and laid hands on several men to the number of more than twenty, who in a peaceable manner demanded of them their warrant for so doing. But they would not shew any authority; which one William Caswell seeing, he said to this purpose; that if they had a warrant, he would obey it; but if they had none, they should carry him, for he would not go. With that they beat him with their hangers about the head, and pulled him along by force; sometimes taking him up between three or four of them, and then letting him fall with violence into the dirt; pushing with great force his stomach and breast against the rails, insomuch that with blows and falls he is deprived of health to this day. When several of the actors of this tragedy were arrested, and a suit commenced against them according to law, they were suddenly surprised and prevented by John Robinson [the keeper of the tower] who granted a warrant to seize the body of Thomas Hull, and the aforesaid William Caswell. The said Thomas Hull being taken in the street by virtue of the aforesaid warrant, and carried before John Robinson, he in a fury asked him how he durst arrest his soldiers; and would not take bail, but sent him to Newgate. One person who merely accompanied him, and desired to bail him, was also committed to prison; where they both lay about ten or twelve days before they could be bailed, and were held bound from sessions to sessions for a long time after, before they could be discharged."

This will give us some idea of the little regard that was paid even to the proclamation of the King, which was issued Jan. 10, 1660, and which declared, "that if any should be so hardy as to seize the persons of any without warrant, they should be left open to the law to be proceeded against, and to receive according to their demerit." The case was now altered. At the time this proclamation was made, the king needed the support of religious people; but having got established in the kingdom, he soon discovered his infidelity and

enmity to religion, and his love of arbitrary power in the state. Had there been any regard to the constitutional laws of the kingdom, such a wretch as John Robinson would not have been permitted to assume such unlimited power, and exercise such horrid cruelties. Many other circumstances of a similar nature are mentioned which fully justify these remarks, and exhibit the character of this Robinson as a person well calculated to act under such a monarch as Charles II.

At the close of this year an event happened in which Robinson was a principal agent, and which proved the severity which the king was disposed to manifest towards dissenters.

Mr. John James, the minister of a congregation of Sabbatarian Baptists, meeting in Bulstake Alley, Whitechapel, was interrupted while preaching. About three o'clock in the afternoon one Justice Chand, with Mr. Wood a Headborough came into the meeting place, and Wood in the king's name commanded him to be silent and come down, having spoken treason against the king. Mr. James taking little notice of this address proceeded in his discourse, when Wood proceeding towards the pulpit again addressed him in the same manner, ordering him to come down, saying, if he did not he would pull him down. To which Mr. James replied, that he should not leave the pulpit unless force were employed. This was accordingly done, and Mr. James was taken before a Justice of the peace charged on the evidence of one Tipler, a journeyman pipe-maker, with having uttered treasonable words against the king. From the character of Tipler the Justice refused to commit Mr. James till he brought a neighbour with him to corroborate his testimony, when he was under the necessity of ordering him into custody.

The persons who were present at the meeting were all secured, and taken before John Robinson and three other Justices sitting at the half moon tavern by seven at a time. To each of them they tendered the oath of allegiance, and those who refused were sent to Newgate, both men and women, being guarded thither by peace officers.

These Justices afterwards entered the meeting house where many of the congregation still were, and sitting down at the table with their clerk, Major Stanley sent for Mr. John James. While they were waiting for him, the Lieutenant of the tower read a paper which he pulled from his pocket, saying, he would read to them what doctrine was preached there that day; which was a charge drawn up from the accusations of Tipler. Addressing the persons present, John Robinson asked them, how they could hear such doctrines as those? To which they unanimously replied, "That they never heard such words, as they shall answer it before the Lord, and they durst not lie."

When Mr. James was brought before them, John Robinson examined him, and amongst other questions he asked the following, viz. "Whether he had not been before him before this? And whether he had not been civilly used?" To which Mr. James replied, "yea, and he thanked him for his civility." Then the Lieutenant asked him, "If he was not counselled to take heed in future?" He answered, "yea, and he had taken it as far as he could with a good conscience." Upon which Robinson told him he should stretch for it; and if he were not hanged, he would be hanged for him. Mr. James answered, He was not careful in that matter, and that they could do not more, than they should be suffered by

the Lord to do. The Lieutenant told him he was not careful; for he had a mind to be handed as some of his holy brethren that went before him. To which Mr. James said, he desired he would not speak so lightly. On Robinson saying something about the fifth kingdom, he asked Mr. James if that was his principle? Who said that he owned the fifth kingdom which was to come. Whereupon they laughed one upon another and said, "Now we have it from his own mouth." They also charged him with having learned to sound a trumpet in order to join with Venner_s party. In reply to which he said that a friend of his who lodged in his house wishing to go to sea, and being required to learn to sound the trumpet, he had requested leave of him to learn in his house, but that he had never learned himself, neither had he been concerned in the late rising as he judged it to be a rash act.

On this his mittimus was made out, and he was committed to the charge of the soldiers to take him to Newgate. His mittimus was as follows:--"To the keeper of the goal of Newgate, or his deputy; Middlesex.

"These are in the king_s majesty_s name to require you to receive into your custody, the body of John James, whom we send you herewith; being taken this present day at a conventicle or private meeting, in the parish of White-chapel; and there speaking in the presence of the people treasonable words against his majesty_s royal person. You shall therefore keep him close prisoner until further order; and this shall be your warrant. Given under our hands, this 19th day of October 1661." John Robinson, Lieut. of the Tower, Edward Chard, Thomas Bide, Thomas Swallow.

On the 14th of November, Mr. James was brought before the Chief Justice Forster, Justice Mallet, Justice Twisden, and Justice Windham at the king_s bench, Westminster hall. He was informed that "he stood indicted for compassing and imagining the death of the king. For endeavouring to levy war against the king. For endeavouring a change of the government. For saying that the king was a bloody tyrant, a bloody sucker, and a blood thirsty man, and his nobles the same. That the king and his nobles had shed the blood of the saints at Charing Cross, and the blood of the covenanters in Scotland, &c." To this he pleaded not guilty, neither in form nor matter; and when asked how he would be tried, he replied by the law of God; at which the lawyers made a great hiss.

He was then remanded to Newgate, and during the time betwixt this and his trial, he received on the 18th of November a letter from a person of note to advertise him there was such a jury of life and death impaneled to proceed upon him, as had not been for many years before, being all picked men, and most of them knights and gentlemen, and that if he did not except against them, or most of the chief of them, he was a dead man." When Mr. James was brought before them on November 19, the Judge exclaimed, Oh, oh, are you come? This is a specimen of the manner in which his trial was conducted. Those who are desirous may read it in the second volume of the State Trials. Suffice it to say, that Mr. James in the most solemn manner denied all the charges exhibited against him, especially his having extolled the late Protector, so far from that, said he, "I opposed him and suffered from him." He concluded his defence by saying, though he should say but little for himself he would drop one word for the Lord, viz. "That the Lord Jesus Christ

was King of nations as well as King of saints; and that the government of kingdoms did of right belong to him." To confirm this sentiment he quoted Rev. 11:15. "The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever." Addressing the Jury, he quoted Isai. 29:21. "That make a man an offender for a word, and lay a snare for him that reproveth in the gate, and turn aside the just for a thing of nought."

He was then remanded back to prison, and was brought up against on the 20th to receive sentence. The next day, Wednesday, his wife by the advice of some friends endeavoured to present a petition to the king; telling him of her husband's innocency, and the character of the witnesses. Bernard Osburn, one of them, having been proved by four respectable persons to have said, "that he had sworn against Mr. James he knew not what." In the evening as the king came out of the park, and entered the palace, Mrs. James presented him with a paper endorsed on the backside, *The humble request of Elizabeth James*. To whom the king replied, holding up his finger, Oh! Mr. James he is a sweet gentleman! and on her following him to get some further answer the door was shut against her.

The next morning she came to the same place, and on the king's entering the park, she intreated his majesty would answer her request. Who then replied, "He is a rogue, and shall be hanged!" One of the lords who was with him asked of whom he spake, to whom the king said, "Of John James that rogue; he shall be hanged: yea he shall be hanged!" On this day he was brought to the bar to receive sentence, and was asked what he had to say why sentence of death should not be passed upon him. He replied in the words of Jeremiah, chap. 26:14,15. "As for me, behold I am in your hand: do with me as it seemeth good and meet unto you. But know ye for certain that if ye put me to death, ye shall surely bring innocent blood upon yourselves, and upon this city, and upon the inhabitants thereof." He also added, "Psalm 16:15. "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints:" and also Zech. 2:8, "He that toucheth you toucheth the apple of mine eye." Sentence being passed Mr. James had only time to add, "Blessed be God, whom man hath condemned, God hath justified."

On the 26th of November, he was executed at Tyburn, according to his tremendous sentence to be hanged, drawn, quartered, &c. These terrors do not appear to have alarmed him, a consciousness of uprightness and integrity preserved him. When some of his friends who had desired leave to accompany him came into the prison, he exclaimed, "Here come my bride men!" embracing them with the greatest joy. But said he, "Must not the sacrifice be bound?" One answered, "Yea, it must be bound with cords." He rejoicing said, "So he had heard."

When the keeper entered, he told him he was a welcome messenger, and hearing the noise of the multitude he said to a friend, "There will be by-and-by as many hallelujahs as shoutings of the people without."

At the place of execution he obtained leave from the Sheriff to speak to the multitude. He began by denying a report that had been industriously circulated, that he was a Jesuit;

declaring he was an Englishman, and had never been out of the land. That his parents were poor but pious people, and that his aged mother was still living. As to my principles, said he, "I do own the title of a baptized believer. I own the ordinances and appointments of Jesus Christ. I own all the principles in Heb. 6:1,2." And concluded by charging his friends who were present, "Not to forsake the assembling of themselves together" for worship, according to their principles, whatever might be the consequence. Adding the charge of David to Solomon, 1 Chron. 28:8. "Now therefore in the sight of all Israel the congregation of the Lord, and in the audience of our God, keep and seek for all the commandments of the Lord your God; that ye may possess this good land, and leave it for an inheritance for your children after you for ever." He then addressed the young and old in a very solemn, impressive, and scriptural manner, concluding with, "Today if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts." Heb. 4:7.

When the executioner proceeded to do his office, he said, "The Lord receive your soul." To which Mr. James replied, "I thank you." Another said, "This is a happy day." He answered, "I bless the Lord it is so." One of his friends said, "The Lord make your passage easy." He said, "I trust he will do so." He was then asked if he had any thing to say to the Sheriff? He replied, "No, but only thank him for his civility." He then said aloud, lifting up his hands, "Father, into thy hands I commit my spirit," and so finished his course. His quarters were taken back to Newgate, on the sledge which carried him to the gallows, and were afterwards placed on the city gates, and his head was set upon a pole opposite the meeting house." [State Trials, vol. ii. p. 546-549; Crosby, vol. ii. 165-172.]

Crosby remarks on this affair, "If there was any undue combination against this poor man; if it was for some reason of state, rather than for any real guilt on his part; if his judgment and conscience rather than any just crime were the cause of his suffering, his blood must be innocent blood.

"Some remarkable things are taken notice of in the narrative, published after his death, as befalling those, who had been instruments in his sufferings, or had expressed a delight in them. But (adds Crosby) I chuse to pass them over in silence." This narrative published in the next year we have not been able to procure.

In the *Heresiography* of Ephraim Pagitt, published in 1662, there is a short account of this affair. This scurrilous writer, though he supposes him guilty of the charges made against him, yet acknowledges "he brought several of his own sect to justify his defence," and says that "he thanked the sheriff for his civility and patience.""[pp. 296, 297.]

Another design to oppress the dissenters was avowed in the year 1662, when a bill was introduced to enforce uniformity in religion, and to eject all ministers from the established church who could not declare unfeigned assent and consent to the articles of the church of England, and of every thing contained in the book of common prayer, and also that would not declare upon oath that it was not lawful on any pretence whatever to take arms against the king, &c. The consequence of this act was, that upwards of two thousand eminently godly, learned, and useful ministers were obliged to leave their

livings, and were exposed to many hardships and difficulties. This act passed, but Bishop Burnet observes, with no very great majority, and received the royal assent May 19, and was to take place from the 24th of August following.

Amongst these pious confessors and intrepid sufferers, were some of the Baptist denomination. In Palmer's Nonconformist's Memorial we meet with the names of several Baptists, and it is not improbable but some others were of this denomination, as it is well known that Calamy has not always mentioned their sentiments on this subject.

HENRY JESSEY, M.A. ejected from St. Georges, Southwark.

WILLIAM DELL, M.A. from the living of Veldon, in Bedfordshire.

FRANCIS BAMPFIELD, M.A. from the living of Sherborne, in Dorsetshire.

THOMAS JENNINGS, from Brimsfield, in Gloucestershire.

PAUL FREWEN, from Kempley, in the same county.

JOSHUA HEAD, place of ejection uncertain.

JOHN TOMBES, B.D. from Leominster, in Herefordshire.

DANIEL DYKE, M.A. from Hadham, in Hertfordshire.

RICHARD ADAMS, from Humberstone, in Leicestershire.

JEREMIAH MARSDEN, from Ardesly Chapel, near Wakefield, in Yorkshire.

THOMAS HARDCASTLE, from Bramham, in Yorkshire.

ROBERT BROWNE, from Whitclady Aston, in Worcestershire.

GABRIEL CAMELFORD, from Stavely Chapel, in Westmoreland.

JOHN SKINNER, from Weston, in Herefordshire.

JOHN BAKER, from Volkestone, in Kent.

JOHN GOSNOLD, of the Charter-house and Pembroke Hall, Cambridge.

THOMAS QUARREL, from some place in Shropshire.

THOMAS EWINS, from St. Evens Church, Bristol.

LAWRENCE WISE, from Chatham Dock, Kent. JOHN DONNE, from Pertenhall in Bedfordshire.

PAUL HOBSON, from the chaplainship of the College, Buckinghamshire.

JOHN GIBBS, from Newport Pagnell.

JOHN SMITH, from Wanlip, Leicestershire.

THOMAS ELLIS, from Lopham, Norfolk.

THOMAS PAXFORD, from Clapton, Gloucestershire.

ICHABOD CHAUNCEY, M.D. chaplain to Sir Edward Harley_s Regiment.

It is rather wonderful that any Baptists were found in the churches at this time, when it is considered that the first act which was passed after the restoration of the king contained an exception of all who had declared against infant baptism from being restored to their livings. It is probable also that amongst those who had been expelled to make room for the old incumbents, some were of this denomination. The Act of Uniformity completed the business, and after this we do not find that any person who rejected the baptism of infants continued in the establishment. The history of the persons mentioned will be given in the different counties where they laboured, in the biographical part of our work.

In this year, and we suppose immediately on the passing this act the king gave proof of his ardent attachment to the church of England, or at least of his willingness to fall in with the prelatial party, in devising means to crush all the different sects of the Nonconformists. This was by causing to be *published "by his Majesty_s authority and under the great seal of England, for the due observation of them,"* A new edition of the *Constitutions and Canons Ecclesiastical; treated upon by the Bishop of London, President of the Convocation for the province of Canterbury, and the rest of the Bishops and Clergy of the said province. And agreed upon with the King_s Majesties license in their Synod begun at London, Anno. Dom. 1608. And in the year of the reign of our sovereign Lord James, by the grace of God, King of England, France, and Ireland the first, and of Scotland the thirty-seventh. London, Printed by A. Warren, for Joshua Kirton, and are to be sold at the sign of the King_s Arms in St. Paul_s Church-Yard, 1662.*

We have been the more particular in giving the full title of this quarto pamphlet; because none of our historians, as far as we have been able to consult them, have taken any notice of it. The first edition of it is printed in Latin in Bishop Sparrow_s collections; but there is no notice taken of the new edition in 1772, though that work was printed in 1671, and published to vindicate the church of England, and to promote uniformity and peace in the same.

From a few of these articles the reader will judge what must have been the sufferings of the Nonconformist_s in every place where they were enforced. Some of these articles follow.

Art. II. *Impugners of the King_s supremacy censured.*

"Whosoever shall hereafter affirm, that the King_s majesty hath not the same authority in causes ecclesiastical, that the godly kings had amongst the Jews and Christian Emperors in the primitive church, or impeach in any part his regal supremacy in the said causes restored to the crown, and by the laws of this realm therein established, let him be excommunicated *ipso facto*, and not restored but only by the Archbishop, after his repentance and public revocation of these his wicked errors."

Art. III. *The church of England a true and Apostolical Church.*

"Whosoever shall hereafter affirm, that the church of England by law established under the King_s Majesty, is not a true and apostolical church, teaching and maintaining the doctrine of the apostles, let him be excommunicated, *ipso facto*, and not restored but only by, &c."

Art. IV. *Impugners of the public worship of God established in the church of England censured.*

"Whosoever shall hereafter affirm, that the form of God_s worship in the church of England established by the law, and contained in the book of common prayer, and administration of sacraments, is a corrupt, superstitious, or unlawful worship of God, or containeth any thing in it that is repugnant to the scriptures, let him be excommunicated, *ipso facto*, &c."

Art. V. *Impugners of the Articles of Religion established in the church of England censured.*

"Whosoever shall hereafter affirm, that any of the nine and thirty Articles agreed upon by the Archbishops and Bishops of both provinces, and the whole Clergy in the convocation holden at London in the year of our Lord God, 1562, for the avoiding of diversities of opinions, an for the establishment of consent touching true religion, are in any part superstitious or erroneous, or such as he may not with a good conscience subscribe unto, let him be excommunicated, *ipso facto*, &c."

Art. VI. *Impugners of the Rites and Ceremonies established in the church of England censured.*

"Whosoever shall hereafter affirm, that the rites and ceremonies of the church of England, by law established, are wicked, antichristian, or superstitious, or such as being commanded by lawful authority, men who are zealously and godly affected, may not with

any good conscience approved them, use them, or as occasion requireth subscribe unto them, let him be excommunicated, *ipso facto*, &c."

Art. VII. *Impugners of the government of the church of England by Archbishops, Bishops, &c. censured.*

"Whosoever shall hereafter affirm, that the government of the church of England under his Majesty, by Archbishops, Bishops, Deans, Archdeacons, and the rest that bear office in the same, is antichristian, or repugnant to the word of God, let him be excommunicated, *ipso facto*, &c."

Art. X. *Maintainers of Schismatics in the church of England censured.*

"Whosoever shall hereafter affirm, that such ministers, as refuse to subscribe to the form and manner of God_s worship in the church of England prescribed in the communion book and their adherents, may truly take unto them the name of another church not established by law, and dare presume to publish that this their pretended church, hath so long time groaned under the burden of certain grievances imposed upon it, and upon the members thereof before mentioned, by the church of England, and the orders and constitutions therein by law established, let them be excommunicated and not restored, &c."

Art. XI. *Maintainers of conventicles censured.*

"Whosoever shall hereafter affirm or maintain, that there are within this realm, other meetings, assemblies, or congregations of the king_s born subjects, than such as are by the laws of this land held and allowed, which may rightly challenge to themselves the name of true and lawful churches, let him be excommunicated, &c."

Art. XII. *Maintainers of Constitutions made in conventicles censured.*

"Whosoever shall hereafter affirm, that it is lawful for any sort of ministers and lay persons, or either of them to join together, and make Rules, Orders, or Constitutions, in causes ecclesiastical, without the king_s authority, and shall submit themselves to be ruled and governed by them, let them be excommunicated, *ipso facto*, and not be restored until they repent, and publicly revoke those their wicked and Anabaptistical errors."

These Canons are in number one hundred and forty one, and are thus concluded. "Wee of our princely inclination and Royall care, for the maintenance of the present Estate and Government of the Church of England by the laws of this our Realme, now setled and established, having diligently, with great contentment and comfort, read and considered of all these their said Canons, Orders, Ordinances, and Constitutions agreed upon, as is before expressed; and finding the same such as We are persuaded will be very profitable not only to Our Clergy, but to the whole Church of this our Kingdom, and to all the true members of it, (if they be well observed.) Have therefore for Us, our Heirs and lawfull Successors, of our especial Grace, certaine knowledge, and meer motion given, and by

these presents do give our Royall assent, according to the forme of the said Statute or Act of Parliament aforesaid, to all and every of the said Canons, Orders, Ordinances, and Constitutions, and to all, and every thing in them contained, as they are before written.

"And furthermore, We do not onely by our said Prerogative Royall, and Supream authority in causes ecclesiastical, ratify, confirm, and establish, by these our Letters Pattents, the said Canons, Orders, Ordinances, and Constitutions, and all, and every thing in them contained, as is aforesaid, but do likewise propound, publish, and straightly enjoin, and command by our said Authority, and by these our Letters Pattents, the same to be dilligently observed, executed, and equally kept by all our loving Subjects of this our Kingdom both within the province of Canterbury, and York, in all points wherein they do, or may concerne every or any of them according to this Our will, and pleasure hereby signified and expressed: and that likewise for the better observation of them, every Minister by what name or title soever he be called, shall in the Parish Church or Chapell, where he hath charge, read all the said Canons, Orders, and Constitutions once every year upon some Sundayes; or Holy Dayes in the afternoon before divine Service, dividing the same in such sort, as that the one half may be read one day, and the other another day, the book of the said Canons to be provided at the charge of the Parish Parish twixt this and the feast of the Nativity of our Lord God next ensuing: Straightly charging and commanding all Archbishops, Bishops, and all other that exercise any Ecclesiasticall Jurisdiction within this realm, every man in his place to see, and procure (so much as in them lieth) all and every of the same Canons, Orders, Ordinances, and Constitutions to be in all points duely observed, not sparing to execute the Penalties in them severally mentioned, upon any that shall willingly or wilfully breake, or neglects to observe the same, as they tender the honour of God, the peace of the Church, Tranquility of the Kingdome, and their duties, and services to us, their KING, and Sovereign. In Witnesse, &c."

When it is recollected that the Canons which relate to the discipline and doctrines and Hierarchy of the church of England, had been by the government about twenty years before declared null and void with the greatest unanimity; not a negative vote being found in both houses, and which occasioned such joy that there were bonfires, and ringing of bells all over the city; and also that the principles now censured had been universally propagated and acted upon during the whole of that time; some conception may be formed of the spirit by which this measure was promoted, and of the terrible consequences which would follow from it, either in making persons vile hypocrites through fear, or impoverished depenants through the fortitude which would lead them now to say, "Whether it be right in the sight of God to obey you rather than God, judge ye."

They that are acquainted with the terrible consequences of an excommunication in the spiritual courts, must be sensible of the hardships put upon the Nonconformists by these

Canons. Suspensions and deprivations from their livings, were not now thought sufficient for the sin of Nonconformity; but the dissenters both clergy and laity, must be turned out of the congregation of the faithful; they must be made incapable of sueing for their lawful debts; they must be imprisoned for life by a Capeas, unless they make satisfaction to the church; and when they die they must not have christian burial. Lamentable was the condition of the dissenters at this time, and dreadful were the sufferings hundreds of them endured; by the operations of these Canons which his Majesty had enjoined on all his subjects; after he had read them, and diligently considered them, with great contentment and comfort. Some of these effects as experienced by the Baptists we shall proceed to narrate.

At Aylesbury in Buckinghamshire the persecution of dissenters was so violent in 1664, that two large houses were turned into prisons to make room for them, as the county goal would not hold the numbers that were committed. Their goods were confiscated, and their persecutors intended if possible to get the penalty of banishment or death inflicted upon them according to the 35th of Elizabeth.

Of these there were twelve persons, ten men and two women, all Baptists, who had been taken at their meeting in or near Aylesbury; and having been legally convicted of the same three months before, they were now brought before a bench of justices at their quarter sessions. They were then required either to conform to the church of England, and take the oaths of allegiance and supremacy, or to abjure the realm as this law directed; and were assured that if they refused to do either of these, sentence of death should be passed upon them.

However, that there may be some show of clemency, they gave them till the afternoon to consider of it. Mr. Farrow one of the justices of that county who lived at Aylesbury, was the principal agent in this prosecution; and the better to carry on his malicious designs he was this day made their chairman. Several of the Justices left the bench being ashamed of these rigorous proceedings or afraid of the consequences of such severity. But Farrow and three or four more continued, and were resolved to push on the matter.

When the prisoners were again brought forth, they all declared that they could neither conform to the church of England, nor abjure their native country nor relations, and therefore must throw themselves on the mercy of the court. Upon this they were by virtue of the aforecited law, declared guilty of felony. Sentence of death was accordingly passed upon them, and they were remanded back to gaol till their execution. The men were Stephen Dagual, minister; Ellit, a teacher; William Whitechurch, a glover, and a deacon of the congregation; Thomas Hill, a linen draper; William Welch, a tallow chandler; Thomas Monk, a farmer; Brundon, a shoe maker; and three more, whose names, Crosby says, he could not obtain. The women were, Mary Jackman, a widow, who had six children; and Ann Turner, spinster.

The sentence was no sooner passed than the officers were sent to their houses to seize on whatever of their effects could be found, which order was executed with great severity. The rest of the dissenters who lived in the town were much alarmed at these proceedings,

expecting it would next come to their turn to be treated in the same manner. Brundon, one of the condemned persons, was prevailed upon by the tears and earnest entreaties of his wife, to make a recantation and take the oaths; but he presently found such horror and distress in his mind for what he had done as exceeded all his fears of death, or distress for his family. He therefore voluntarily returned to the prison again, and declared with the greatest signs of grief and trouble his repentance for what he had done; and there continued with his companions, resolving to die with them in defence of that cause he had so shamefully renounced.

Thomas Monk, son of one of the condemned persons, upon the passing of the sentence immediately rode to London, where he applied to Mr. William Kiffin, who had considerable influence at court, particularly with Chancellor Hyde. When he had related the whole matter to him, they went with great expedition to Hyde, and entreated him to lay the case before the king, which he readily did. The king seemed much surprised that any of his subjects should be put to death for their religion only, and enquired whether there was any law in force that would justify such proceedings. Being satisfied on this point, he promised his pardon, and gave orders to the lord chancellor accordingly. But considering that the form of passing a pardon would take some time, and that those who had so hastily passed sentence of death might be as hasty in executing it, they renewed their suit to his majesty that an immediate reprieve might be granted, which his majesty as graciously complied with; and it was given to Thomas Monk, who made all possible haste with it to Aylesbury.

When he related his success at court, and produced his majesty's reprieve, it was not more joyful to his friends than surprising to their persecutors, and put a stop in some measure to their violence. The condemned persons however were kept close prisoners till the next assizes, when the judge brought down his majesty's pardon, and they were all set at liberty.

The influence which Mr. Kiffin had at court in all probability arose from his great property: it is certain his principles as a Baptist did not recommend him. It is said that the king once condescended, when in want of money, to ask him a favour: this was, that he would lend him forty thousand pounds. Mr. Kiffin apologized for not having it in his power to lend his majesty so great a sum, but told the messenger that if it would be of any service, he would present him with ten thousand pounds, which sum was accepted; and Mr. Kiffin used afterwards to say that he had saved thirty thousand pounds by his liberality.

The attempt to crush the dissenters was pursued with rigour, and every means adopted to prevent the increase of their principles. For this purpose dragoons were sent into the different counties to suppress whatever meetings of dissenters they could find. In Buckinghamshire, the excellent Benjamin Keach felt the weight of their rude fury. Discovering a meeting where he was preaching, they came with great rage and violence upon the assembly, and swore they would kill the preacher. Accordingly he was seized, and four of the troopers declared their determination to trample him to death with their horses. Having bound him, they laid him on the ground for this purpose, and had actually

prepared themselves to accomplish this horrid design. But the officer discovering their intention, rode up to them just as they were going to spur their horses to ride over him, and interposing his authority prevented them. He was then taken up and tied behind one of the troopers across his horse and carried to gaol, where he lay some time and suffered great hardships. Being a bold and zealous preacher, he was frequently seized and committed to prison, where he was sometimes bound, but often released upon bail.

In the year 1664 he wrote a little book which many of his friends wished him to publish for the use of their children. This request he complied with, and entitled it, *The Child's Instructor, or a New and Easy Primmer*. He did not put his name to it, and procured a friend to write a recommendatory preface; from which it should seem that he apprehended it would expose him to some difficulties, as there were several things in it contrary to the doctrines and ceremonies of the church of England.

This book was no sooner printed, and some few of them sent down to him, than one Mr. Strafford, a justice of the peace for that county, was informed of it. He immediately took a constable with him, and went to the house of Mr. Keach, where they seized all the books they could find, and bound him to appear at the assizes to answer for his crime, in a recognizance of a hundred pounds himself, and two sureties of fifty pounds each.

The assizes commenced at Aylesbury, October the 8th, 1664, and Lord Chief Justice Hyde, just now mentioned, afterwards Lord Clarendon, presided as judge. The account of this trial will give a pretty correct view of his lordship's character, and of the shameful prostitution of justice resorted to in order to deprive the subjects of their liberty, and to punish the nonconformists in those days of persecution.

Mr. Keach was called to the bar the first day in the afternoon. After some reflections upon his person and profession, the judge, holding one of the primmers in his hand, said to him, Did you write this book? Mr. Keach replied, that he did write the greatest part of it. The judge then said with great indignation, What have you to do to take other men's trades out of their hands? I believe you can preach, as well as write books. Thus it is, to let you and such as you are to have the scriptures to wrest to your own destruction. In your book you have made a new creed. I have seen three creeds before, but never saw a fourth till you made one!

To this Mr. Keach answered, I have not made a creed, but a confession of my faith. What is a creed then? said the judge. Mr. Keach replied, your Lordship said that you had never seen but three creeds; but thousands of Christians have made a confession of their faith.

The judge speaking many things concerning baptism and the ministers of the gospel, Mr. Keach began to answer, but was prevented by the judge, who said, you shall not preach here, nor give the reasons of your damnable doctrine to seduce and infect the king's subjects: these are not things for such as you to meddle with, nor to write books of divinity. I will try you for it before I sleep.--He accordingly gave directions to the clerk to draw up the indictment; but though he spent much of his time in assisting the clerk, who was very diligent in preparing the bill, they could not get ready for trial till the next day.

While the indictment was drawing up, the witnesses were sworn, and bid to stand by the clerk till it was finished, and then go with it to the grand jury. During this interval the judge endeavoured to incense the jury against the prisoner, representing him as a base and dangerous fellow. I shall send you presently, said he, a bill against one that has taken upon him to write a new primmer for the instruction of your children; and if this be suffered, children by learning it will become such as he is, and therefore I hope you will do your duty.

The court being set the next day, the grand jury found a true bill. Mr. Keach being brought to the bar, the clerk said, Benjamin Keach, hear your charge. Thou art here indicted by the name of Benjamin Keach, of Winslow, in the county of Bucks, for that thou being a seditious, schismatic person, evily and maliciously disposed and disaffected to his majesty_s government and the government of the church of England, didst maliciously and wickedly on the fifth of May in the sixteenth year of the reign o four sovereign lord the king, write, print, and publish, or cause to be written, printed, and published, one seditious and venomous book entitled, The Child_s Instructor, or a New and Easy Primmer; wherein are contained by way of question and answer these damnable positions, contrary to the book of common prayer and the liturgy of the church of England; that is to say, in one place you have thus written:--

Q. Who are the right subjects of baptism?

A. Believers, or godly men and women, who make profession of their faith and repentance.

In another place you have maliciously and wickedly written these words:--

Q. How shall it go with the saints?

A. Very well: it is the day they have longed for. Then shall they hear the sentence, Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you; and so shall they reign with Christ on the earth a thousand years, even on Mount Sion in the New Jerusalem; for there will Christ_s throne be, on which they must sit down with him.

Then follows this question with the answer in plain English words:--

Q. When shall the rest of the wicked and the fallen angles, which be the devils, be judged?

A. When the thousand years shall be expired: then shall all the rest of the dead be raised, and then shall be the last and general judgment: then shall all the rest of the dead and the devils be judged b y Christ and his glorified saints; and they being arraigned and judged, the wicked shall be condemned, and cast with the angels into the lake of fire, there to be burned for ever and ever.

In another place you have wickedly and maliciously written these plain English words:--

Q. Why may not infants be received into the church now as they were under the law?

A. Because the fleshly seed is cast out. Though God under that dispensation did receive infants in a lineal way by generation; yet he that hath the key of David, that openeth and no man shutteth, and shutteth and no man openeth, hath shut up that way into the church, and opened the door of regeneration, receiving in none now but true believers.

Q. What is the case of infants?

A. Infants that die are members of the kingdom of glory, though they be not members of the visible church.

Q. Do they then that bring in infants in a lineal way by generation err from the way of truth?

A. Yea, they do; for they make not God's holy word their rule, but do presume to open a door that Christ hath shut, and none ought to open.

Also in another place thou hast wickedly and maliciously composed a short confession of the Christian faith, in which thou hast affirmed this concerning the second person in the blessed Trinity, in these plain English words:--I also believe that he rose again from the dead, and ascended into heaven above, and there now sitteth at the right hand of God the Father; and from thence he shall come again at the appointed time to reign personally on the earth, and to be judge of the quick and the dead.

In another place thou hast wickedly and maliciously affirmed these things concerning true gospel ministers, in these plain english words following:--Christ hath not chosen the wise and prudent men after the flesh, not great doctors and rabbis; not many mighty and noble, saith St. Paul, are called; but rather the poor and despised, even tradesmen and such like, as were Matthew, Peter, Andrew, Paul, and others. Christ's true ministers have not their learning and teaching from men, or from universities, or from human schools; for human learning, arts and sciences, are not essential in order to the making of a true minister, but only the gift of God which cannot be bought with silver and gold. And also as they have freely received the gift of God, so they do freely administer: they do not preach for hire, for gain or filthy lucre. They are not like false teachers who look for gain from their quarter; who eat the fat and clothe themselves with the wool, and kill them that are fed. Those that put not into their mouths they prepare war against. Also they are not lords over God's heritage: they rule them not by force nor cruelty, neither have they power to force and compel men to believe and obey their doctrine, but only persuade and entreat. This is the way of the gospel as Christ taught them.--Many other things hast thou seditiously, wickedly, and maliciously written in the said book, to the great displeasure of Almighty God, the scandal of the liturgy of the church of England, the disaffection of the king's people to his majesty's government, the dangers of the peace of this kingdom, to the evil example of others, and contrary to the statute in that case made and provided.

The indictment being read, the clerk said, how say you, Benjamin Keach? Are you guilty or not guilty? To this Mr. Keach replied, the indictment is very long; I cannot remember half of it, nor have I been accustomed to plead to indictments. I desire to have a copy of it, and liberty to confer with council about it, in order to put in my exceptions; and then I shall plead to it.

The judge addressing Mr. Keach, said, It is your intention to delay your trial till the next assizes. No, my lord, said Mr. Keach: I have no design by this to delay my trial. The judge answered, I will not deny you what is your right, but you must first plead to the indictment, and afterwards you shall have a copy of it. Mr. Keach replied, I desire I may have a copy of it before I plead, in order to put in my exceptions against it.

Judge. You shall not have it before you plead, guilty or not guilty.

Keach. It is what has been granted to others.

Judge. You shall not have a copy of it first; and if you refuse to plead guilty or not guilty, I shall take it pro confesso, and give judgment against you accordingly.

When Mr. Keach saw that he was thus overruled by the judge, and that he was denied his rights as an Englishman, he pleaded not guilty.

Judge. Now you shall have a copy of your indictment, and I will give you an hour_s time to consider it.

Keach. If I may have no longer time allowed me, I do not desire it.

Judge. I have something else to do than to wait upon you. You are not a person fit to go abroad till the next assizes, and you would think it hard if I should commit you to gaol till then. But because you shall not say but that you were offered fair, if you will find sufficient sureties for your appearance at the next assizes, and for your behaviour till then you shall not be tried till then.

Mr. Keach knowing that his appearing at any dissenting meeting would be deemed a breach of his good behaviour, durst not accept of this proposal; and therefore said, I am willing to be tried now.

Judge. Go on then, in God_s name.

The jury were then called by their names, and sworn to well and truly try the traverse between the king and the prisoner at the bar.

The clerk read the indictment, and told them that he had pleaded not guilty; that their charge was to inquire whether he was guilty or not; and so the witnesses were called, whose names were Neal and Whitehall.

Neal swore that Justice Strafford sending for him, he waited on his worship, and was commanded to fetch his staff of authority and come again. That then they went to one Moody_s stall and asked for some primmers which he had; but he answered that he had none. From thence they went to Benjamin Keach_s house, where first they saw his wife, he himself being in an inner room. They asked her whether there were not some primmers in the house. She said there were, and about thirty were brought and delivered to them.

Justice Strafford also deposed, that going to the house of the prisoner, he found and seized the said primmers, and that the prisoner at the bar confessed before him that he wrote and composed the said book; that then a copy of the prisoner_s examination before the said deponent, signed with his own hand, was produced and read: wherein was contained that the prisoner being asked whether he was the author or writer of the said book, answered, yes he was; and further declared that he delivered part of the copy to one Oviat, a printer, since dead, and that the rest of the copy he sent up by another hand, but that he knew not who printed it; that about forty of them were sent down to him, of which he had disposed of about twelve, and that the price was five pence each.

The judge then called for a common prayer book, and ordered one of the primmers to be given to the jury; commanding the clerk to read those sentences in the indictment that were taken out of the said book, that the jury might turn to them to see that the said positions were contained therein.

The first position, which affirms that "believers only are the right subjects of baptism," being read; this, said the judge, is contrary to the book of common prayer, for that appoints infants to be baptized, as well as men and women. He then read several places wherein the baptizing of such is enjoined and vindicated.

The next position is that which affirms that "the saints shall reign with Christ a thousand years." This, said the judge, is contrary to the creed in the book of common prayer, and is an old heresy which was cast out of the church a thousand years ago, and was likewise condemned by the Council of Constance about five hundred years since, till now this *rascal* hath revived it.

On reading that position in the indictment which denies "that infants are to be received into the church now as they were under the law," the judge said, this also is contrary to the book of common prayer; which appoints infants to be received into the church, and directs the priest to say when he hath sprinkled the child, we receive this child into the congregation of Christ_s flock.

The next position being read, wherein it is affirmed that "infants who die are members of the kingdom of glory, though not of the visible church," the judge said, this he speaks of infants in general; so that the child of a Turk is made equal to the child of a Christian. But our church hath determined otherwise; viz. that if an infant die after baptism, and before it hath actually sinned, it is saved, because original sin is washed away in baptism.

After this, the position in the indictment which was taken out of the confession of faith was read. This, said the judge, is contrary to our creed; for whereas this saith of Christ that "he ascended into heaven above, and there now sitteth at the right hand of God the Father, and from thence he shall come again at the appointed time of the Father to reign personally on the earth, and to be the judge both of quick and dead;" our creed saith only, from thence shall he come to judge both the quick and the dead. And as to that concerning gospel ministers, this also is contrary to the book of common prayer. Whereas the position in the indictment saith, that "Christ hath not chosen great rabbis and doctors, but rather the poor and despised, and tradesmen; the book of common prayer does admit of such, namely, doctors and rabbis. He then read some passages concerning the qualifications of ministers, and their manner of consecration in proof of it. He afterwards and, Because Christ when he was on earth made choice of tradesmen to be his disciples, this fellow would have ministers to be such now; tailors, pedlars, and tinkers; such fellows as he is. But it is otherwise now, as appears from the manner in which the church has appointed them to be chosen, ordained, and consecrated.

The judge having ended, the prisoner thought now he might have liberty to speak for himself, and accordingly began.

Mr. Keach. As to the doctrines---

Judge. You shall not speak any thing here, except to the matter of fact; that is to say, whether you wrote this book or not.

Keach. I desire liberty to speak to the particulars of my indictment, and answer those things that have ----

Judge. You shall not be suffered to give the reasons of your doctrine here, to seduce the king's subjects.

Keach. Is my religion so bad that I may not be allowed to speak?

Judge. I know your religion: you are a fifth-monarchy man, and you can preach, as well as write book and you would preach here if I would let you; but I shall take such order as you shall do no more mischief.

This threatening made Mr. Keach and some of his friends, who were unacquainted with the law of the case, fear that he intended to have him hanged.

Keach. I did not write all the book, for there is an epistle written to it by another hand; neither can it be proved that I wrote all that is put in the indictment.

Judge. It is all one, whether you wrote it yourself, or dictated to another that wrote it; but it appears by your examination under your own hand that you wrote it all.

Keach. Because I wrote the greater part of it, I was content to let it go with the word all in my examination before Justice Strafford; but I cannot in conscience say that I wrote it all, nor is it proved that I published it.

Judge. Yes, for Moody had six books of you.

Keach. I did neither sell them, nor deliver them to him.

Judge. He had them at your house, and it is not likely that he should take them without your consent.

Keach. I do not say that he had them without my consent.

Judge. It is all one, then.

Some few more words passed; but Mr. Keach not being permitted to answer all the particulars charged upon him, was content not to require more proof of his being the author of the book.

The judge then summed up the evidence, and gave his charge to the jury; wherein he endeavoured to incense them against the prisoner, as he had done before in his charge to the grand jury.

The jury having received their charge, withdrew, and staid for some hours. At length one of the bailiffs who attended them came and told the judge that the jury could not agree.

But, said the judge, they must agree. The bailiff replied, that they desired to know whether one of them might not speak to his worship about something whereof they were in doubt. Yes *privately*, said the judge; and ordered that one should come to him on the bench. When the officer had fetched one of them, the juryman was set upon the clerk's table, and the judge and he whispered a great while; and it was observed that the judge having his hands upon his shoulders would frequently shake him as he speak to him.

Upon the person returning, the whole jury quickly came in; and being according to custom called over by their names, the clerk proceeded.

Clerk. How say you? Is Benjamin Keach guilty of the matter contained in the indictment against him, or not guilty?

Foreman. Guilty in part.

Clerk. Of what part?

Foreman. In the indictment he is charged with these words: When the thousand years shall be expired, then shall all the rest of the *devils* be raised: but in the book it is, "then shall the rest of the *dead* be raised."

Clerk. Is he guilty of the indictment, that sentence excepted?

One of the jurymen said, I cannot in conscience find him guilty, because the words in the indictment and the book do not agree.

Judge. That is only through a mistake of the clerk, and in that one sentence only. You may find him guilty of all, that sentence excepted: but why did you come in before you were agreed?

Foreman. We thought we had been agreed.

Judge. You must go out again and agree. And as for you that say you cannot in conscience find him guilty, if you say so again without giving reason for it, I shall take an order with you.

Then the jury withdrew, and in a little time returned again and brought in this verdict; that he was guilty of the indictment, that sentence wherein *devils* is inserted instead of *dead* only excepted.

Mr. Keach was called to the bar, and the judge proceeded and passed sentence as follows.

Judge. Benjamin Keach, you are here convicted for writing, printing, and publishing a seditious and schismatical book, for which the court_s judgment is this, and the court doth award. That you shall go to gaol for a fortnight without bail or mainprize; and the next Saturday to stand upon the pillory at Aylesbury in the open market, from eleven o_clock till one, with a paper upon your head with this inscription: For writing, printing, and publishing a schismatical book, entitled, *The Child_s Instructor or a New and Easy Primmer*. And the next Thursday, to stand, in the same manner and for the same time, in the market at Winslow; and then your book shall be openly burnt before your face by the common hangman, in disgrace of your and your doctrine. And you shall forfeit to the king_s majesty the sum of twenty pounds, and shall remain in gaol until you find sureties for your good behaviour, and for your appearance at the next assizes; then to renounce your doctrines, and make such public submission as shall be enjoined you. Take him away, keeper!

Keach. I hope I shall never renounce those truths which I have written in that book.

Clerk. My lord, he says that he shall never repent. The judge making no answer to this, the goaler took him away.

It is unnecessary to make any remarks on the arbitrary manner in which this trial was conducted, and on the means by which the verdict was extorted. The common prayer book was now the standard of truth, and was placed upon a level with the statue law of the kingdom. Surely none could have expected that a Protestant judge would have sentenced any person to such a punishment for such conduct. But "the wicked walk on

every side when the vilest of men are exalted," and therefore it was not difficult to procure a jury suited to such a purpose.

The attempts made to obtain a pardon, or a relaxation of this severe sentence, were ineffectual; and the sheriff took care that every thing should be punctually performed. He was accordingly kept close prisoner till the Saturday, and agreeably to his sentence was brought to the pillory at Aylesbury. Several of his religious friends and acquaintances accompanied him thither; and when they expressed their sorrow for his hard case, and the injustice of his sufferings, he said with a cheerful countenance, The cross is the way to the crown. His head and hands were no sooner fixed in the pillory, but he began to address himself to the spectators to this effect.--Good people, I am not ashamed to stand here this day, with this paper on my head. My Lord Jesus was not ashamed to suffer on the cross for me; and it is for his cause that I am made a gazing-stock. Take notice, it is not for any wickedness that I stand here; but for writing and publishing his truths, which the Spirit of the Lord hath revealed in the holy scriptures.

A clergyman who stood by could not forbear interrupting him, and said, It is for writing and publishing errors; and you may now see what your errors have brought you to.

Mr. Keach replied, Sir, can you prove them errors? But before the clergyman could return an answer, he was attacked by some of the people, who told him of his being "pulled drunk out of a ditch." Another upbraided him with having been found "drunk under a haycock." Upon this the people, turning their attention from the sufferer in the pillory, laughed at the drunken priest, insomuch that he hastened away with the utmost disgrace and shame.

After the noise of this was over, the prisoner began to speak again, saying. It is no new thing for the servants of the Lord to suffer and be made a gazing-stock; and you that are acquainted with the scriptures know that the way to the crown is by the cross. The apostle saith, "that through much tribulation we must enter into the kingdom of heaven;" and Christ saith, "He that is ashamed of me and of my words, in an adulterous and sinful generation, of him shall the Son of Man be ashamed, before the Father, and before the holy angels." But he was frequently interrupted by the goaler, who told him that he must not speak; and that if he would not be silent, he must force him to it. After he had stood some time silent, getting one of his hands at liberty, he pulled his bible out of his pocket, and held it up to the people; saying, take notice, that the things which I have written and published, and for which I stand here this day a spectacle to angels and to men, are all contained in this book, as I could prove out of the same, if I had opportunity.

The goaler again interrupted him, and with great anger enquired who gave him the book. Some said that his wife gave it him. The good woman stood near him all the time of his being in the pillory, and frequently spoke in vindication of the principles for which he suffered. But Mr. Keach said that he took it out of his pocket. The goaler then took it from him, and fastened up his hand again. It was impossible however to keep him from speaking, for he began again and spoke as follows.

"It seems that I cannot be suffered to speak to the cause for which I stand here; neither could I be suffered to speak the other day; but it will plead its own innocency, when the strongest of its opposers shall be ashamed. I do not speak this out of prejudice to any person, but do sincerely desire that the Lord would convert them and convince them of their errors, that their should may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus. Good people, the concernment of souls is very great, so that Christ died for them; and truly a concernment for souls was that which moved me to write and publish those things for which I now suffer, and for which I could suffer far greater things than these. It concerns you therefore to be very careful, otherwise it will be very sad with you at the revelation of the Lord Jesus from heaven, for we must all appear before his tribunal." Here he was again interrupted, and forced to be silent a considerable time; but at length he ventured to speak again. "I hope (said he) the Lord's people will not be discouraged at my suffering. Oh, did you but experience the great love of God, and the excellencies that are in him, it would make you willing to go through any sufferings for his sake. And I do account this the greatest honour that ever the Lord was pleased to confer upon me."

After this he was not able to speak much more, for the sheriff came in great rage, and said, if he would not be silent he should be gagged; and the officers were ordered to keep the people at a greater distance from him, though they declared they could not do it. After a long silence he ventured to speak again. "This said he is one yoke of Christ's, which I experience is easy to me, and a burden which he doth make light." Finding he could not be allowed to speak, he kept silence until the two hours were expired, except uttering this sentence: "Blessed are they that are persecuted for righteousness sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." When the full time according to his sentence was ended, the under keeper lifted up the board of the pillory; and as soon as his head and hands were at liberty, he blessed God with a loud voice for his great goodness towards him!

On the Saturday following he stood in the same manner and for the same time at Winslow, the town where he lived, and had his book burnt before him according to the sentence.

Crosby says he was not able to obtain any particulars of this good man's behaviour at Winslow, and for the account here given he was indebted to a person who was present, and who wrote the relation on the spot. This person remarked several things which proved the malice of his persecutors; as that he stood in the pillory two hours to the minute, which was a more strict execution of the sentence than he ever witnessed either in town or country. That others always had their hands at liberty; but Mr. Keach's were carefully kept in the holes almost all the time, which must have made his sufferings the more painful. Thus, said he, judgment is turned away backward, and justice standeth afar off, for truth is fallen in the streets, and equity cannot enter. He that departeth from evil maketh himself a prey; and the Lord saw it, and it displeased him that there was no judgment." [Crosby, vol. ii. p. 185-104. State Trials.]

In this year 1664, an act was passed for suppressing "seditious conventicles." The preamble sets forth that the sectaries under pretence of tender consciences, at their meetings had contrived insurrections; and the act declares the 35th of Elizabeth to be in full force, which condemns all persons refusing peremptorily to come to church, after conviction, to banishment, and in case of return, to death without benefit of clergy. It enacts further, that if any person above the age of sixteen, after July 1st 1664, shall be present at any meeting under colour or pretence of any exercise of religion in other manner than is allowed by the liturgy or practice of the church of England, where shall be five or more persons than the household, shall for the first offence, upon record made upon oath under the hand and seal of a justice of peace, suffer three months imprisonment, or pay a sum not exceeding five pounds; for the second offence, six months imprisonment, or ten pounds; and for the third offence, banishment to some of the American plantations for seven years.

This was a terrible scourge to the laity, put into the hands of a single magistrate without the verdict of a jury, the oath of the informer being deemed sufficient. Before this act took place, the people were courageous, and exhorted their ministers to preach till they went to prison; but when it came home to themselves, and they had been once in goal, they began to be cautious, and consulted among themselves how to avoid the edge of the law in the best manner they could. For this purpose their assemblies were frequently held at midnight, and in the most private places; yet notwithstanding all their caution, they were frequently disturbed: but it is remarkable that under all their hardships they never made the least resistance, but went quietly along with the soldiers or officers when they could not fly from them. The distress of so many families induced some to confine themselves within their own houses; some removed to the plantations; and others had recourse to occasional conformity, to avoid the penalty for not coming to church. The Independents, Baptists, and Quakers, declined the practice; for they said, if persecution was the mark of a false church, it must be absolutely wrong to join with one that was so notoriously guilty.

While these oppressive measures were pursued, and the nation in general was immersed in vice and irreligion, London was visited by the plague, which at that time is said to have been the most dreadful within the memory of man. It was preceded by an unusual drought: the meadows were parched and dried up like the highways, insomuch that there was no food for the cattle, which occasioned a murrain among them. The plague was so dreadful in the city and suburbs that eight or ten thousand died in a week. The richer inhabitants fled to the remoter counties; but the calamities of those who were left behind, and of the poorer sort are not to be described. Trade was at a full stand; all commerce between town and country was entirely cut off, and nobody would receive their wares. The country housekeepers and farmers durst not receive their city friends or relations till they had performed quarantine in the fields or out houses. If a stranger passed through the neighbourhood, they fled from him as from an enemy. In London the shops and houses were quite shut up, and many of them marked with a red cross and an inscription over the door, "Lord have mercy upon us!" Grass grew in the streets; and every night the bell-man went his rounds with a cart, crying, Bring out your dead! The number of those who died of the pestilence in London only, amounted to about one hundred thousand: how many

died of it in other parts of the kingdom, where it also raged for nearly a year, cannot be ascertained.

The greatest part of the established clergy fled, and deserted their parishes at a time when their assistance was most wanted; but some of the ejected ministers ventured to preach in the vacant pulpits, imagining that so extraordinary a case would justify their disregard of the penal laws. The ministers who ventured on this undertaking were Mr. Thomas Vincent, Mr. Chester, Mr. Turner, Mr. Grimes, Mr. Franklin, and others. The face of death, and the arrows that flew among the people in darkness and at noon-day, awakened both preachers and hearers. Many who were at public worship one day were thrown into their graves the next. The cry of great numbers was, what shall we do to be saved? Such an awful time England never before saw.

But it will amaze all posterity, says Neal, that in a time both of war and of the plague, and when the nonconformist ministers were hazarding their lives in the service of the poor distressed congregations of London, the prime minister, Lord Clarendon, and his creatures, instead of mourning for the sins of the nation and meditating a reformation of manners, should pour out all their vengeance upon the nonconformists in order to make their condition insufferable!

On October the 31st, 1665, an act to restrain the Nonconformists from inhabiting corporations received the royal assent. This was called the Oxford or Five-mile Act, because it prohibited any minister from coming within five miles of any city or corporation, under very severe penalties, unless they would take the following oath. "I, A.B. do solemnly declare, that it is not lawful, upon any pretence whatsoever, to take up arms against the king; and that I do abhor the traitorous position of taking arms by his authority against his person, or against those that are commissioned by him, in pursuance of such commission. And I do swear that I will not at any time to come endeavour the alteration of the government, either in church or state. So help me, God."

The great body of nonconformist ministers refused this oath, choosing rather to leave their habitations, their relations and friends, and all visible support, than destroy the peace of their consciences. Those ministers who had some little estate or substance of their own, retired to some remote or obscure villages, or such little market towns as were not corporations, and more than five miles from the places where they had preached: but in many counties it was difficult to find such places of retirement, for either there were no houses untenanted, or they were annexed to farms which the minister would not occupy; or the people were afraid to admit them into their houses, lest they be suspected as favourers of nonconformity.

The sufferings of the dissenters were incredibly great at this period; yet very few of the ministers conformed, and the body of the dissenters remained stedfast to their principles; and the church, says Mr. Baxter, gained neither reputation nor numbers.

"But as if the judgment of heaven (says Neal) upon this nation were not heavy enough, nor the legislature sufficiently severe, the bishops must

now throw their weight into the scale. For in the very midst of the plague, July the 7th, 1665, Archbishop Sheldon sent orders to the several bishops of his province to make a return of the names of all ejected nonconformist ministers, with their places of abode and manner of life; and the returns of the several bishops are still kept in the Lambeth library. The design of this scrutiny was to gird the laws closer upon the dissenters, and to know by what means they got their bread; and if this tender-hearted archbishop could have had his will, they must have starved, or gone into foreign countries for a livelihood."

In addition to the terrible calamities of the war and plague, it pleased God this year to suffer the city of London to be laid in ashes by a dreadful conflagration, which began September the 2d 1666, in Pudding-lane, behind the place where the monument now stands. Within three or four days, thirteen thousand and two hundred dwelling houses were consumed, besides eighty-nine churches; among which was the cathedral of St. Paul_s, many public structures, schools, libraries, and stately edifices. Multitudes of people lost their estates, their goods and merchandize, and some few their lives. The King, the Duke of York, and many of the nobility were spectators of the desolation, till at length it ceased almost as wonderfully as it began.

The next year was memorable for the fall of the persecuting Lord Clarendon, lord high chancellor of Great Britain, who had rendered himself obnoxious by his magisterial airs towards the king. He was impeached at the bar of the house of lords, in the name of all the commons of England, of high treason, for sundry arbitrary and tyrannical proceedings contrary to law, by which he had acquired a greater estate than could be honestly procured at such a time. The earl, not daring to abide the storm, withdrew to France--leaving a paper behind him in which he denied almost every article of the charge; but the parliament voted it scandalous, and ordered it to be burnt by the common hangman; and he was banished the king_s dominions for life. Thus the measure he meted to others was meted to him again. Little did he think, when he passed sentence on Benjamin Keach that in less than four years a sentence equally painful, and indeed far more so owing to its being just, would be passed on himself, and executed with as great rigour, and with as unrelenting severity.

VOLUME I.

CHAP. IX.

1667 - 1685.

The fall of Lord Clarendon, the great patron of persecuting power, and the removal of Archbishop Sheldon and Bishop Morley from the councils of the King, occasioned a considerable alteration in favour of the dissenters, so that they went publicly to their meetings in London without fear.

The king appeared disposed to promote a general toleration, but the House of Commons were so enraged at the favours shown to the Nonconformists that they presented a petition to his majesty, praying him that he would issue a proclamation for enforcing the laws against conventicles. To this the king consented, and a proclamation declared, _he would not suffer such notorious contempt of the laws to go unpunished, &c._ The proclamation however produced but little effect, as the people still ventured to attend the meetings, although forbidden by the laws. To this different causes contributed. One was the want of churches, in consequence of the fire of London. In addition to this, the indolence of the established clergy, and the laboriousness of the nonconformist ministers were so apparent, that a decided preference was given to the latter by all who had any regard for religion.

Bishop Burnet acknowledges this, and says, _The king was highly offended at the behaviour of most of the bishops. When complaints were made of the conventicles, the king told me (says he) that the clergy were chiefly to blame; for if they lived well, and gone about their parishes, and taken pains to convince the nonconformists, the nation might have been well settled; but they thought of nothing but to get good benefices, and keep a good table._--In another conversation with bishop Burnet about the ill state of the church, his majesty said, _If the clergy had done their part, it had been easy to run down the nonconformists; but they will do nothing, and will have me do every thing, and most of them do worse than if they did nothing. I have a very honest chaplain (said he) to whom I have given a living in Suffolk; but he is a very great blockhead, and yet he has brought all his parish to church. I cannot imagine what he could say to them, for he is a very silly fellow; but he has been about from house to house, and I suppose his nonsense suited their nonsense; and in reward of his diligence, I have given him a bishoprick in Ireland._

The measures of the king to promote a general toleration doubtless flowed from a desire to tolerate the Roman catholics; but to this the dissenters were very averse, and rather chose to suffer themselves than be instrumental to the bringing in of popery.

In 1670, the House of Commons proposed the addition of some new clauses to the Conventicle Act, to which the court agreed, as they thought this would reduce the presbyterians to the necessity of petitioning for a general toleration. _If we would have opened the door, (says Mr. Baxter,) that their toleration might have been charged upon us, as done for our sakes and by our procurement, we might in all likelihood have had our part in it; but I shall never be one of them who shall consent to petition for the papists_ liberty. No craft of jesuits or prelates shall make me believe that it is necessary for the nonconformists to take this odium upon themselves._ The court bishops were for the bill, but the moderate clergy were against it. To the honour of Bishop Wilkins it ought to be recorded, that he spoke against it in the house; and when the king desired him in private to be quiet, he replied that _he thought it an ill thing both in conscience and in policy: therefore, as he was an Englishman and a Bishop, he was bound to oppose it. And since by the laws and constitution of England, and by his majesty_s favour, he had a right to debate and vote, he was neither ashamed nor afraid to own his opinion in that matter._ The bill however passed both houses, and received the royal assent, April 11, 1670.

This bill was the cause of incredible hardships to all the nonconformists, and many of the Baptists suffered severely by it. It was now enacted as follows:--_The preachers or teachers in any Conventicle shall forfeit twenty pounds for the first, and forty for the second offence. And also those who knowingly suffer any conventicles in their houses, barns, yards, &c. shall forfeit twenty pounds. Any justice of peace, on the oath of two witnesses or any other sufficient proof, may record the offence under his hand and seal; which record shall be taken in law for a full and perfect conviction, and shall be certified at the next quarter sessions. The fines above mentioned may be levied by distress and sale of the offender_s goods and chattels, and in case of the poverty of such offender, upon the goods and chattels of any other person or persons who shall be convicted of having been present at the said conventicle, at the discretion of the justice of peace, so as the sum to be levied on any one person, in case of the poverty of others, do not amount to above ten pounds for any one meeting. The constables, headboroughs, &c. are to levy by warrant from the justice, and the money is to be divided, one third for the use of the king, another third for the poor, and the other third to the informer or his assistants, regard being had to their diligence and industry in discovering, dispersing, and punishing the said conventicles. The fines upon ministers for preaching are to be levied also by distress; and in case of poverty, upon the goods and chattels of any other present; and the like upon the house where the conventicle is held, and the money to be divided as above.

And it is further enacted, that justices of the peace, constables, headboroughs, &c. may be warranted with what aid, force, and assistance they shall think necessary, to break open and enter into any house or place where they shall be informed of the conventicle, and take the persons so assembled into custody: and the lieutenants, or other commissioned officers of the militia, may get together such force and assistants as they think necessary to dissolve, dissipate, and dispense such unlawful meetings, and take the persons into custody. To ensure the strict execution of this act, it was added, _That if any justice of the peace refuse to do his duty in the execution of this act, he shall forfeit five pounds._

Great numbers were prosecuted in consequence, and many industrious families reduced to poverty. Several ministers were confined in goals and chose prisons, and warrants issued against them and their hearers, to the amount of large sum of money. Neal says, that in the diocese of Salisbury, the prosecution was the hottest, owing to the instigation of Bishop Ward, many hundreds being driven from their families and trades.

The principal information we possess relating to the Baptists at this time refers to the counties of Bedford and Sussex. As these accounts were published at the time, and in a circumstantial manner, they are very interesting, and tend to show the way in which these cruel laws were executed throughout the kingdom.

The first we shall notice is a pamphlet entitled, *A true and impartial narrative of some illegal and arbitrary proceedings by certain justices of the peace and others, against several innocent and peaceable nonconformists in and near the town of Bedford, upon pretence of putting in execution the late Act against Conventicles: together with a brief account of the late sudden and strange death of the Grand Informer, and one of the most*

violent malicious prosecutors against these poor people. Published for general information in the year 1670._

This narrative is preceded by an anonymous letter, which is as follows:--

_Sir,

_Some proceedings at Bedford, pursuant to the late set of parliament, a true narrative whereof is herein inclosed, afford matter both of wonder and dislike to such as have observed them. When you have perused the paper, you will conclude with me and others, that this text needs no comment. It is plain that in despite of Magna Charta, and in defiance to all laws and rules of righteousness, neighbourhood, and humanity, they resolve to ruin the nonconformists, though the instruments are no ways able to recompense the king_s and kingdom_s damage thereby. The sufferers are cheerful and peaceable; their immediate persecutors are the scum of the people, and chiefly the appurtenants of the commissarie_s court. The most forward instrument of that sort is one that hath openly avowed and declared his esteem for popery above other religions. If some check be not given to these extravagancies, many families will suddenly be ruined, and the public trade and welfare endangered; which the interest of some, and the rage, revenge, and enmity of others will not admit regard to. Pardon this trouble, when I have told you that the particulars of the narrative are all true, and will be proved in every part. So I have remaining at present only to tell you, I am Sir, Your assured friend._

The narrative then proceeds:--

_On Lord_s day, May the 15th, at the dwelling house of one John Fen, many persons being assembled for religious exercise, West and Feckman, two apparitors, by a warrant from one Mr. Foster, who is a justice of peace and the commissarie_s deputy, did enter the house, and force the meeters to Mr. Foster_s house, who fined every one of them severally according to their reputed ability; and committed the preacher to prison for words he spake against the church of England, then occasioned by the discourse of Mr. Foster. By virtue of their warrant, the apparitors charged a constable and a churchwarden to assist them; but they neglecting, being not willing to the work as they themselves declared, were fined each of them five pounds; though by intercession of friends, the fines are not yet levied.

_On Friday following, Thomas Battison, another churchwarden, and the most active and busy in the work, having with much labour and difficulty called together the overseers of the poor, and the constables of the several wards, to levy the several fines upon the goods of the meeters, did first attempt to levy the fine of ten pounds upon the goods of one *John Burdolf*, a malster, who having sold all his malt before the act commenced, and

delivered his malt and malt-house into his possession to whom he had sold them, none of the officers would join with Battison to break open the door of the malt-house, or to distrain the malt, though he most importunately charged and besought them to do it, promising to bear them harmless.

_While Battison and the other officers were debating in the open yard before the malthouse door, a great number of all sorts of persons gathered about them, expressing by turns their indignation against him for attempting this against Burdolf, whom the whole town knew to be a just and harmless man. The common sort of people covertly fixing a calf_s tail to Battison_s back, and deriding him with shouts and halloos, he departed without taking any distress there; and advanced with the other officers to *Edward Covington_s* shop, to levy five shillings for his wife being at the meeting, where none of the officers would distrain but Battison, who took a brass kettle: but when he had brought it to the street door, none of the officers would carry it away; neither could he hire any one to do it in two hours time, though he offered money to such needy persons among the company as wanted bread. At last he got a youth for sixpence to carry the kettle less way than a stone_s throw, to an inn-yard where he had before hired a room to lodge such goods under pretence to lodge grain; but when the youth had carried the kettle to the inn-gate, being hooted at all the way by the common spectators, the inn-keeper would not suffer the kettle to be brought into his yard; and so his man set it out in the middle of the street, none regarding it, till towards night a poor woman that receiveth alms was caused by an overseer to carry it away.

_From hence, Battison, with the rest of the officers at his heels, proceeded to distrain one *John Spencer* for a fine of forty shillings; but his shop door being locked, Battison could not prevail with the officers to join with him in breaking it open. So this day ended, without any other distress than that of the kettle.

_The next day, which was the market day, the justices understanding how Battison was discouraged in his work by the backwardness of the other officers, and the open discountenance of the other people, commanded the officers to break open the doors and levy the distresses, and promised to bear them harmless. Immediately, old Battison, with a file of soldiers and constables, in the middle of the market time advanced again to the malthouse of John Burdolf, situate in an inn-yard in the middle of the market-place, and breaks open the doors, but not without long time and trouble, all people refusing to lend either bars or hammers, which they sent from place to place to borrow for that purpose. When the doors were broken open, Battison distrained fourteen quarters of malt, but it was night before he could carry them away; for though the market was then full of porters, yet none of them would assist, though charged strictly by Battison and the constables, but ran all way, and left their fares; some of them

saying, they would be hanged, drawn, and quartered than they would assist in that work; for which cause the justices committed two of them, which they could take, to the goal.

_The next day, being Lord_s day, fines were doubled upon the meeters before the first could be levied; for their assembled again at the same house, according to their custom. Battison, with the two apparitors, by another warrant from Mr. Foster, entered the meeting place about nine o_clock in the morning; but th meeters refused to depart before their exercise was ended, unless forced to it. Battison sends word of it to Mr. Foster, who returns a verbal order, that Battison should charge certain gentlemen of the town, whose names he had sent by the messenger, to assist him; which Battison accordingly did, going to their houses to call them, though there were near a hundred common people spectators in the streets, and none of them then charged to assist, and also trained-band soldiers ready in town for this service, partly at the charge of these gentlemen whom Battison had to warned to assist, and who were so warned, as is supposed, upon design to have them incur the penalties of five pounds for their refusing. About ten in the morning the meeters went with Battison and the apparitors to the Swan in Bedford, where being kept till four in the afternoon, and their names taken by the justices, they were set at liberty.

_Next morning, Mr. Foster appears early in the streets with Battison, the two apparitors, a file of soldiers, and some constables, to see the fines levied upon the meeters goods; charging to his assistance such persons as he sees, and sending for others to their houses, but got few or none besides his first company; most of the tradesmen, journeymen, labourers, and servants having either left the town, or his themselves to avoid his call. The town was so thin of people that it looked more like a country village than a corporation; and the shops being generally shut, it seemed like a place visited by the pestilence.

_The first distress was attempted upon the goods of one *Nicholas Hawkins*, a cutler, who was fined forty shillings; but his goods being removed beforehand, and his house visited with the small-pox, the officers declined entering. Mr. Foster meeting here one *John Croker*, who was also fined three pounds, commanded his assistance; but refusing he was committed to the custody of one of the town-serjeants then present.

_From hence Mr. Foster went into the house of one *Michael Shepheard*, a shoe-maker, who was fined five shillings; where a distress was made not only for the same, but also for one shilling more, because he being asked by Mr. Foster whether he were at church the day before, and not answering, only desired to know who accused him or would swear it.

_The next house in their way was one *Thomas Honylove_s*, a journeyman shoemaker, fined twenty shillings or more; whose children lying sick of the small-pox in the house where his goods were, the officers were unwilling to enter. Mr. Foster therefore drew them off to one *Thomas Cowper*, a heelmaker, who was fined forty shillings. Here they distrained three cart-loads of wood, cut especially for his work, which was of more value than any of his household goods, he being a poor man, and living only by making heels and lasts.

_The next remove was to one *John Croker_s* house, beforementioned, a linen draper, fined three pounds. Having removed his goods to another place, Battison would not trouble himself to distrain them, but said he would take a better opportunity.

_Near this place lived one *Daniel Rich*, a tanner, and constable of that ward, who being fined five shillings for his wife, head his best wearing-coat distrained by the immediate order of Mr. Foster.

_From hence he marches to *John Spencer*, a grocer, whose goods he distrained for a fine of about forty shillings. The next neighbour was *William Jay*, a baker, who was distrained for five shillings. Next to him lived one *Edward Isaac*, a blacksmith, fined forty shillings for himself and his wife; from whom they took away locks, shovels, and the very anvil upon which he forged his work. Battison would have pulled down the bellows also, but that it required more time and labour than his itch to greater prizes in other places would allow him. Hastening to their market, they leave *Paul_s* parish, and invade that of *Cuthberts*; where they find the door of one *Thomas Arthur*, a pipe-maker, locked, who was fined five pounds. Before they broken open the door, it was unlocked on the inside, and Mr. Foster entered to distrain the goods. Arthur desired to know how much money he had distrained for; and Mr. Foster replied that it was for eleven pounds. Arthur then desired to see the warrant; which being produced, he saw the fine was but six pounds; but Mr. Foster replied, that there was five pounds more for keeping his door locked! When *Thomas Arthur* perceived that Mr. Foster would distrain all his goods, he said, Sir, what shall my children do? Shall they starve? Mr. Foster replied, That so long as he was a rebel, his children should starve! And so, on Wednesday following, old Battison, and the two apparitors, with a file of musquiteers, and a cart, carried away what household goods they thought fit, and all the wood necessary to his trade, not leaving so much as would suffice for burning a kiln of pipes ready set, though earnestly desired by the poor pipe-maker himself, and others of *Battison_s* company.

_Mr. Foster, having done his work at the pipe-makers, proceeds to one *Robert Brown_s*, a gardener, distraining all his goods for a fine supposed to be three pounds. Hastening to the chief place they aimed at, they passed

into Peter's parish to the house of *Mr. Mary Tilney*, a gentlewoman well descended, and of good estate, who was fined twenty pounds. To make her exemplary in suffering for that offence, Mr. Foster himself, attended by his public notary, will see the fine effectually levied upon her goods; and cart being provided for that purpose, they distrained and carried away all the goods in her house which they thought worth their labour, even to the hangings of the room and the sheets off her bed, insomuch that the widow was forced that night to borrow sheets of her neighbours; nor did they leave her so much as one feather bed on which to lay the sheets. She had indeed more household goods, but as she could not with safety possess them for her necessary use, and foreseeing the waste intended upon them, she had prudently secured them abroad. The value of the goods taken away by the officers was supposed to be between forty and fifty pounds; but Mrs. Tilney was more troubled at the crying and sighing of her poor neighbours about her, than for the loss of her goods, which she took very cheerfully. And so the officers left her having finished this day's work.

The next day more fines were to be levied on the rest of the meeters; but Battison finding it would lie hard upon him and the two apparitors, for want of more help than they had the day before, and foreseeing that if he deferred charging assistance till he began his work, all people would get out of the way, he walked alone in the streets early in the morning, looking into the shops, to charge men beforehand to be ready. As soon as this was perceived by the people, most of the tradesmen and other inhabitants instantly deserted the town, or hid themselves as before. About ten o'clock, old Battison, with the soldiers and constables, whom he had warned overnight to be in readiness, marched up the High-street, where he levied the fine of five pounds upon *John Fen*, the haberdasher before-mentioned, at whose house the meeting was; taking away all the hats and hatbands in his shop, and the next day carted away his household goods. Having thus dealt with Fen, he proceeded to deal with the same measure with another hatter, one Samuel Fen, who was also fined five pounds, and dealt with as his brother had been before him.

The next fine they proceeded to levy was forty shillings upon the goods of one *Thomas Woodward*, a maltster. But one Richard Layfield being in possession of the malthouse, to whom the maltster had sometime before sold all his malt, and quitted the possession, old Battison met with a stop, and was persuaded to defer distraining till Richard Layfield had spoken to the justices who were then met at the Swan. He apprised them that Thomas Woodward owed him sixty pounds which he had formerly lent him in money, and that he was bound to deliver two hundred and ninety quarters of malt to others, for money and barley had of them; and therefore on condition that Layfield should acquit him of the sixty pounds, and oblige himself to deliver the malt aforesaid, he did sell and deliver to Layfield all the malt and barley lying in his malthouse, and that there was

no fraud therein. Layfield also produced the deed to the justices, and averred that the reason of making this bargain was to secure his sixty pounds. But notwithstanding all this, Sir George Blundell, one of the justices, said, That Richard Layfield went about herein to defraud the king, and therefore bound him over to the next assizes. He also said, that so long as Thomas Woodward aforesaid offended, the malt should be distrained, and that he would leave the meetings worth nothing; and when he had done that, he would fill the prisons with them. He added, If they do not like it, let them stand up and defend themselves as we did.

_There were no further distresses made last week. It is conjectured that some falling out between the Mayor and Mr. Foster on Wednesday delayed their proceedings. It seems the Mayor was not willing that Battison, who is churchwarden for Paul_s, should distrain in the two parishes on the other side of the river where the Mayor lived: but on Monday the 30th instant, Feckman the chief apparitor, with the churchwarden, constable, and overseer of Mary_s parish in Bedford, began to distrain. The person_s name is *Joseph Rulfhead*, at whose house they first began, and the fine they levied was three pounds. On their approach he desired to see the warrant, and not finding his name in it, he discharged Feckman from coming upon his ground. After an appeal to the justice however, they took from him two timber trees of about seven pounds value, instead of three pounds.

_On the same day, the officers went to distrain one *John Clarke*, a grocer, for forty shillings; and breaking open his door, they took his household goods, those in his shop being of little value. From thence they went to the house of one *John Rush*, waggoner, to levy a distress of three pounds upon him, where they seized a new cart and wheels for the same.

_The same day, in part of a village called Cotton-End, near Bedford, the officers distrained upon several persons who had been convicted by the justices, for having a meeting at the house of one *Thomas Thorowgood*, and who were fined to a greater value than the whole of their estates amounted to. They are stripped of all their substance, and the said Thorowgood hath not left to him so much as his loom to work with, being a weaver, and by his labour therein supporting himself and his family.-- But because there are several remarkable fair circumstances relating to this matter which clearly evince the undue and most inhuman dealings of some of the justices, especially of Sir George Blundell, with the poor people last mentioned, a particular and exact account of the whole proceeding will be here inserted.

_From the discourse of a little child who said there had been a meeting at the house of Thomas Thorowgood in Cotton-End, the wife of John Pryor, victualler, resorted to Sir George Blundell, and made oath of the child_s

report to her. Sir George issued a warrant for the appearance of several persons of that endship, suspected to have been there, and who appeared before several justices at the Swan in Bedford. On being examined, they neither confessed that a meeting had been held, or that they had been there. The justices dealt severely with them that such as would confess who was the preacher should be acquitted: but no confession was made, and generally they referred to any proof that could be brought against them, not being willing to accuse themselves or others. The justices however concluded that there was sufficient ground to convict them, and assessed fines upon them severally. Thomas Thorowgood's fine, at whose house the meeting was said to be, was nineteen pounds. The officers distrained upon him, and took all that he had, with the implements of his trade; and the said Thorowgood and his wife are since departed from their dwelling, and gone away.

_The wife of one *George Winright*, and a son-in-law of Winright's were fined ten pounds five shillings, for having been at the meeting. George Winright is tenant to the Earl of Exeter; and being in arrears of rent to his landlord about Michaelmas last, he prevailed with his two sons-in-law to be bound for him for the payment of the money due; and for the indemnity of his two sons he passed over to them all his goods and chattels by a bill of sale. The writing was afterwards destroyed, and the father pleaded that there were no goods of the sons there, though they were once in their possession. The cancelling of the writing however was deemed a collusion, and the officers were ordered to proceed in the distress. Winright drives away his cattle, sells some of them at Potten market, and others to one Miller, an inhabitant of the same parish. Sir George Blundell sent a warrant for the buyer and seller to appear before him, to whom they gave information of the sale and payment. But all their pleas being disregarded, the said knight demanded sureties for their appearance at the assizes, declaring with his wonted vehemence that he would bind them both over, and distrain the cattle likewise. Winright being frightened, promised to pay the ten pounds, and accordingly did so; but a few days after, being told by a lawyer that he had done wrong, he repaired to Sir George, acquainting him with what the lawyer had said, and entreated his favour. This without delay he imparted, beating him well for his pains.

_*Thomas Langley*, an inhabitant of Cotton-End, being also fined five pounds ten shillings for attending the suspected meeting, presumed on the favour of Sir George, on account of his having lately been his servant, and told the officers he would pay the money if he could not get any abatement. He appealed to his master; but not prevailing for any such kindness, he was unwilling to pay the fine, having very little stock, and owing for the greatest part of that, as well as being in arrears with his landlord. But the officers having strict charge to take all he had and sell it for five pounds ten shillings, they distrained his three cows, really worth

ten pounds; and going to sell them, a neighbour out of compassion paid the officer the fine, and sent the cows back to the owner.

Some other persons of the said endship were distrained upon by the officers, and had their little substance taken from them and deposited in the house of Pryor, whose wife at first informed of the said meeting, and where the goods still remain to be sold to any who are willing to buy the same, that with the proportion allotted to the informer, the said Pryor may again have some money to put into his purse, having prodigally wasted all that he lately sold a considerable estate for, which lay in the aforesaid endship.

We are not acquainted with the writer of this pamphlet, but all the parties mentioned we have no doubt belonged to the church at Bedford, as most of their names are found in the records of that society; and several of them were ministers; of whom we intend to give some further account in the biographical part of our work.

This year also was published a pamphlet entitled, A narrative of the late proceedings of some justices and others, pretending to put in execution the late act against conventicles, against several peaceable people in and about the town of Lewes in Sussex, only for their being quietly met to worship God: together with a brief account of the like proceedings against some at Brighthelmstone, and others at Chillington in the same county.--The author of this narrative, who Crosby supposes was Mr. Jeremiah Ives, a Baptist minister in London, introduces it with a short epistle to the reader, which is as follows. _Thou art here presented with an account of some proceedings, pretended to be grounded upon the late act against conventicles. Of the act itself I say nothing at all; nor do I call these proceedings, said to be grounded thereon, either arbitrary or illegal. Read, and be judge thyself. Only be sure of this, that thou hast a faithful narrative. What you find therein, relating to the conviction of these persons, was reported by some officers then present, or dropped from the informers themselves; and the witness of an enemy, we used to say, is a double testimony._

_On May the 29th 1670, being the Lord_s day, some Christians in and about Lewes in the county of Sussex, to the number of five hundred, say their adversaries, were met together to hear the word of God; and that they might if possible avoid exasperating their enemies on one hand, and provide for their own security on the other, the meeting was appointed at three o_clock in the afternoon, an hour of the greatest privacy. People were appointed to go to a house where they usually met, within a mile of Lewes; but from thence they were directed to a private by-lane, within a quarter of a mile of the house. This may be enough to take off the imputation of contempt of authority so frequently cast upon them by some, and that of rashness as often objected by others."

It is not said who the minister was, but that he was fined forty pounds, and forty of his hearers five shillings each; and the minister being unable to pay, his fine was levied upon five of the people. The manner in which these fines were collected is so similar to that

mentioned in the Bedford narrative that it is unnecessary to relate it. [Crosby, vol. ii. 244-258.]

By these statements it will be seen what was the rage and malice which prevailed at this time against the nonconformists, by means of the magistrates and the clergy. It is said by Crosby, from a manuscript of Mr. Josiah Diston, who had often been committed to prison and bound over to several assizes and sessions for having private meetings in his house, _that he found the spirit and temper of the judges and justices in those times to be such, that when any person or accusation came before them concerning dissenters, they were zealous in aggravating their crimes; and many who were usually silent in other cases, were very forward speakers in these. Whereas, in other criminal matters they were cool, and very willing to show all the favour they could._ [Crosby, vol. ii. p. 258.] Though many of the bishops did not appear in these persecutions, choosing rather to throw the blame upon the civil magistrates, yet some of them, as Bishop Ward and Bishop Gunning, often disturbed the meetings in person. This last gentleman was so zealous in the cause, that he sunk his character by giving a public challenge to the Presbyterians, Independents, Baptists, and Quakers, and appointed three days for the disputation; in the cathedral church at Chichester, on the first of which his lordship went into the pulpit in the church, where was a considerable congregation, and charged the former three with sedition and rebellion out of their books, but would hear no reply. The Baptists on the second day were treated with much greater respect than the Presbyterians and Independents. The bishop probably recollected the dispute which he had with Mr. Henry Denne in St. Clements church by Temple Bar in 1658--and from this circumstance was able to judge the strength of their arguments. When the day on which he was to dispute with the Quakers arrived, they had summoned their friends from different parts of Sussex and Hampshire, and when the bishop railed on them, they paid him in his own coin, and with interest too. The bishop not being able to withstand this furious attack, prudently left the field of action, and on his going to his house his opponents followed him, and one of them as he was passing pulling his lawn sleeve said, _The Hireling fleeth! The Hireling fleeth!_

In the year 1672, the king published a declaration of indulgence, by which he asserted his absolute power as head of the church, without doubt as introductory to asserting arbitrary and unlimited dominion in the state. As this is somewhat curious, we shall here insert it.

_Charles Rex.

_Our care and endeavour for the preservation of the rights and interests of the church have been sufficiently manifested to the world by the whole course of our government since our happy restoration, and by the many and frequent ways of coercion that we have used for reducing all erring and dissenting persons, and for composing the unhappy differences in matters of religion which we found among our subjects upon our return; but it being evident by the sad experience of twelve years that there is very little fruit of all these forcible courses, *we think ourselves obliged to make use of that supreme power in ecclesiastical matters which is not only*

inherent in us, but hath been declared and recognised to be so by several statutes and acts of parliament. And therefore we do not accordingly issue this our declaration, as well for the quieting of our good subjects in these points as for inviting strangers in this conjecture to come and live under us, and for the better encouragement of all to a cheerful following of their trades and callings; from whence we hope, by the blessing of God, to have many good and happy advantages to our government; as also for preventing for the future, the danger that might otherwise arise from private meetings and seditious conventicles.

And in the first place, we declare our express resolution, meaning, and intention to be, that the church of England be preserved and remain entire in its doctrine, discipline, and government, as now it stands established by the law; and that this be taken to be as it is, the basis, rule, and standard, of the general and public worship of God, and that the orthodox conformable clergy do receive and enjoy the revenues belonging thereunto; and that no person, though of a different opinion and persuasion, shall be exempt from paying his tithes and other dues whatsoever. And further we do declare, that no person shall be capable of holding any benefice, living, or ecclesiastical dignity or preferment of any kind, in this our kingdom of England, who is not exactly conformable.

We do in the next place declare our will and pleasure to be, that the execution of all, and all manner of penal laws in matters ecclesiastical, against whatsoever sort of Nonconformists or Recussants, be immediately suspended, and they are hereby suspended; and all judges, judges of assizes, and gaol delivery, sheriffs, justices of the peace, mayors, bailiffs, and other officers whatsoever, whether ecclesiastical or civil, are to take notice of it, and pay due obedience thereunto.

And that there may be no pretence for any of our subjects to continue their illegal meetings and conventicles, we do declare that we shall from time to time allow a sufficient number of places, as they shall be desired, in all parts of this our kingdom, for the use of such as do not conform to the church of England, to meet and assemble in, in order to their public worship and devotion, which places shall be open and free to all persons.

But to prevent such disorders and inconveniences as may happen by this our indulgence, if not duly regulated, and that they may be the better protected by the civil magistrates, our express will and pleasure is, *that none of our subjects do presume to meet in any place, until such place be allowed, and the teacher of that congregation approved by us.*

And lest any should apprehend that this restriction will make our said allowance and approbation difficult to be obtained, we do farther declare that this our indulgence, as to the allowance of public places of worship

and approbation of the preachers, shall extend to all sorts of Nonconformists and Recusants, except those of the Roman catholic religion; to whom we shall in no wise allow public places of worship, but only indulge them their share in the common exemption from the penal laws, and the exercise of their worship in their private houses.

_And if after this our clemency and indulgence, any of our subjects shall pretend to abuse this liberty, and shall preach seditiously, or to the derogation of the discipline and government of the established church, or shall meet in places not allowed by us, We do hereby give them warning, and declare, that we will proceed against them with all imaginable severity: and we will let them see that we can be as severe to punish such offenders when so justly provoked, as we are indulgent to truly tender consciences.

Given at our Court at Whitehall, this 15th day of March, in the four-and-twentieth year of our reign.

This deep-laid scheme, under the plausible pretence of *toleration*, was evidently designed to introduce popery. The protestant dissenters, till they could get meeting-houses built, were more restrained from meeting together than before, as they could not meet in private houses, and it was not likely they would be very forward to erect meeting-houses when they had no security for enjoying the use of them. The papists on the contrary, who appear to be left out of his majesty's gracious care, could meet when they pleased without molestation. Mr. Neal says, _The protestant nonconformists had no opinion of this dispensing power, and were not forward to accept of liberty in this way. They were sensible that the indulgence was not granted out of love to them, nor would it continue any longer than it would serve the interests of popery. Some of them refused to accept this indulgence, because they would not admit that the king possessed a power to enact laws without the concurrence of parliament; but most of the ministers both in town and country, wearied out by vexatious fines and imprisonments, and thinking it right to embrace every opportunity to preach the gospel, accepted it and took out licenses. Great numbers of the people attended their meetings, and a cautious and moderate address of thanks was presented to the king for their liberty, but all were afraid of the consequences._ [Neal, vol. iv. p. 413-416.]

Of the Baptists who availed themselves of this indulgence, Mr. Andrew Gifford of Bristol applied for and obtained a licence under the king's hand and seal, and countersigned by Lord Arlington, one of the secretaries of state. The following is a true copy of the original, which is preserved with some papers of the late Dr. Andrew Gifford in the Baptist Library at Bristol.

_Charles R.

_Charles by the grace of God, King of England, Scotland, France, and Ireland, defender of the faith &c. To all mayors, bailiffs, constables, and

other our officers and ministers, civil and military, whom it may concern, greeting. In pursuance of our declaration of the 15th of March, 1671--2, we do hereby permit and licence Andrew Gifford of our city of Bristol, of the persuasion commonly called Baptists, to be a teacher, and to teach in any place licensed and allowed by us, according to our said declaration.

_Given at our Court at Whitehall, the 5th day of September, in the twenty-fourth year of our reign, 1672. Gifford a teacher, By his majesty_s command. Arlington._

This measure not answering the end proposed by the king, to introduce popery, was soon put an end to; and in the next year the Test Act was introduced, by which the dissenters were effectually prevented from holding any place under government without prostituting a solemn ordinance of Christ, by receiving the Lord_s supper according to the usage of the church of England, in some parish church on some Lord_s day immediately after divine service and sermon.

The dissenters were now again generally persecuted. Mr. Keach once more felt the fury of his adversaries, and was forced to move from place to place to avoid their rage. He was now a resident in London; and though the congregation of which he was pastor were very careful to conceal themselves, yet were they twice disturbed.

Being met together for religious worship in Jacob-street in a private house down an alley, the churchwardens, with Mr. Cook a constable, came in and seized six persons, and had them before Justice Reading, who bound them over to appear at the quarter sessions. At another time they met together at the widow Colfe_s house at Kennington, to celebrate the Lord_s supper. At the conclusion they sung a hymn, which soon brought the officers of the parish to them; but from the convenience of a back door they all escaped except one, who returning back again for something he had left behind was apprehended and taken. He was carried before a justice of the peace who committed him to prison, where he continued till some of his friends obtained bail for him. At the next quarter sessions he was fined, and his fine paid. The widow Colfe, at whose house they met, had a king_s messenger sent to apprehend her; but being informed that she was nurse to one who lay sick of the small-pox, he departed with an oath, and sought no more after her.

Mr. Keach was afterwards sought for by one of the messengers of the press, for printing a little book entitled, *The Child_s Instructor*. This was, as nearly as he could remember, the same as that for which he was imprisoned and set in the pillory. He was at this time a tenant of the noted informer Cook, but unknown to him by name. When Cook found out his name, he told him that one of the king_s messengers was in quest of him, and that on account of his being his tenant he screened him. He was however, soon after taken up by a warrant by the said messenger, who left him with another informer in the neighbourhood by whom he was carried before Justice Glover.

The justice being informed of a gentleman of worth and credit, John Roberts, M.D., a member of Mr. Keach_s church, sent for him. When he arrived, pointing to Mr. Keach,

he asked whether he knew that man. Yes, said the doctor, very well. Then said the justice, Will you be bound for him? Yes, replied the doctor, _body for body._ The doctor's bail being taken, Mr. Keach was discharged; but in the issue he was fined twenty pounds, which he was obliged to pay._

Many vile attempts were made to render the Baptists odious and contemptible. Amongst others, the following deserves notice.--In 1673, a pamphlet was published entitled, *Mr. Baxter Baptized in blood*. _This work, which we have perused, gives an account of a barbarous murder committed by four Anabaptists at Boston in New England, upon the body of a godly minister, named Josiah Baxter, for no other reason than that he had worsted them in disputation; which was set forth with all the circumstances and formalities of names, speeches, actions, times, and place, to make it look the more authentic; orderly and most pathetically describing the most execrable murder that ever was known: viz. of first stripping and cruelly whipping, then unbowelling and flaying alive, a sound and godly minister in his own house, in the midst of the howlings, groans, and shriekings of his dear relations lying bound before him. And the better to create belief, this sad story is pretended to be published by the mournful brother of the said murdered minister, named Benjamin Baxter living in Fenchurch street, London. Moreover the authors had dealt so artfully in order to avoid suspicion that they had prevailed on Dr. Samuel Parker to license it.

This infamous libel concludes in the following manner. _I have penned and published this narrative in *perpetuam rei memoriam*, that the world may see the spirit of these men, and that it may stand as an eternal memorial of their cruelty and hatred to all orthodox ministers._

Providentially this slander was not long undiscovered to be a gross and notorious falsehood, not containing a tittle of truth from first to last. A ship came from Boston about twenty days after the murder was said to have been committed; and two of the men, the master of the vessel and a merchant that was with him, affirmed upon oath before the lord mayor that they never knew any such man as Mr. Josiah Baxter; that they heard nothing of such a report in America, but believed it to be a very great falsehood. The deposition of these persons was published; the lord mayor published an interdict to prevent the sale of the pamphlet; and many of the publishers were committed to prison.

Though the influence of Mr. Kiffin at court, the matter underwent a rigid examination at the council board, when upon finding it a falsehood, the following order was published in the gazette.

By the order of Council.

_Whereas there is a pamphlet lately published, entitled *Mr. Baxter baptized in blood*, containing a horrible murder committed by four Anabaptists upon the person of Mr. Josiah Baxter, near Boston in New England: the whole matter having been enquired into and examined at the council board, is found altogether false and fictitious.

The licenser, Dr. Samuel Parker, being also acquainted with the whole matter, confesseth his mistake, and too sudden credulity in the licensing so strange a pamphlet, as appears by the testimonial under his own hand.

The doctor's testimonial was then given at length, which was read in council, May 30th, 1673; but notwithstanding all he said, it was strongly suspected that he was the author of this scandalous libel. He was accordingly charged with it by the satirical Andrew Marvel.

In reply to the question of Dr. Parker _whether he had never heard nor read of any public disturbances on account of religion?_ _Yes (says Marvel) I have, and whosoever shall do so ought to be severely punished. Whether I have not heard of the merry pranks of John of Leyden and the Anabaptists of Germany? Yes, and they were handled as they deserved. Nay, moreover I have heard of the Anabaptists of New England in a book printed in the year 1673, entitled *Mr. Baxter baptized in blood*, which came out under the license of the *Author of the Ecclesiastical Politic*; being therefore as is to be supposed a book of theological nature. It was indeed a piece of Ecclesiastical History, which he thought it seems very fit to *reconcile to the present juncture of Affairs, and recommend to the Genuis of the age: faithfully relating the cruel, barbarous, and bloody murder of Mr. Baxter, an orthodox Minister who was killed by the Anabaptists and his skin most cruelly flea_d off from his body*. And yet from beginning to end there never was a compleater falsehood invented. But after the *Author of the Ecclesiastical Politic* had in so many books of his own endeavoured to harangue up the notion into fury against tender consciences, there could not have been contrived by the wit of man, any thing more hopeful to have blooded them upon the Nonconformists than such a spectacle, and at the end of his orations to flourish the skin of an orthodox minister in this manner flea_d off by the Anabaptists. So that *Se non era vero fu ben trovato*. And in good earnest I dare not swear but it was the *Author of the Ecclesiastical Politics* own handy work. Several words I observe that he frequently and peculiarly makes use of in his other books, *Concerns, Villians, Villanies, Booby, &c.* but as for his brisk and laboured periods they may be traced every where._

Many other proofs are adduced to fix the odium of this transaction on Doctor Parker, whose name stands loaded with infamy for falling in with all the measures adopted by a popish prince to introduce popery and arbitrary power. But at length Mr. Marvel succeeded in silencing him and the whole tribe of scurrilous pamphleteers who were doubtless employed to bring the Nonconformists into contempt; and who were so afraid of this sensible and sarcastic writer, that a letter was left at his house signed J.G. and dated November 3, 1673, which concluded with these words; _If thou darest to print or publish any lie or libel against Doctor Parker, by the Eternal God I will cut thy throat._ [Rehearsal Transposed, part 2, p. 110-112.]

In this year 1674, an event took place which it will be necessary to mention, on account of the notice which was taken of it at the time and the confusion it occasioned. This was the controversy between the Baptists and the people called Quakers.

Mr. Thomas Hicks, a Baptist minister, published several pamphlets in succession, entitled *A Dialogue between a Christian and a Quaker*, at which the Quakers were much offended, calling them malicious forgeries and fictions, stuffed with manifest slanders against their persons and principles. To the first and second dialogues William Penn replied in a book entitled, *Reasons against railing, and truth against fiction*. To this Mr. Hicks answered in his third dialogue, entitled *The Quaker condemned out of his own mouth*. To this Mr. Penn replied in a work entitled, *The counterfeit christian detected*: wherein he charges Mr. Hicks with manifold perversions, downright lies and slanders, &c. On this Mr. Penn appealed to the Baptists in and about London, for justice against Thomas Hicks; threatening in case of a refusal, to pursue him, not only as Thomas Hicks, but as the Baptists' great champion, peculiar agent, or representative: and that it might be the more taken notice of, they employed persons to give the book away at the door of the several meeting-houses.

In consequence of these measures, the Baptists appointed a day August 28, 1674, for the examination of Thomas Hicks, and to prevent the Quakers from pleading any surprise, they sent a letter to William Penn, and another to George Whitehead, to be present at the examination. But receiving notice that they were out of town, they sent to John Osgoods, to tell him that he, or any of his friends might be present at the time appointed, for the matter say they, being matter of fact, and not of dispute, we conceive we may proceed to hear Thomas Hicks's defence. From this it is evident that the Quakers had no cause to complain of the Baptists, having taken the advantage of the absence of William Penn, and George Whitehead, nor could it be from the want of timely information that neither these nor any other Quaker was present.

On the appointed day the Baptists met, and Mr. William Kiffin opened the assembly, and gave an account of the occasion of their meeting. He then read the Quakers' appeal and told them, that the business of the day was not to dispute, but to hear, examine, and judge whether Thomas Hicks was guilty of charging the Quakers falsely.

Thomas Hicks being present endeavoured to prove that he had not accused them falsely either as to their doctrines or practices. The charges he had made were that they held 1. That the light in every man is God. 2. That the soul is part of God, of God's being, without beginning, and also infinite. 3. That Jesus Christ was not a distinct person without us. 4. That Christ redeems himself. 5. That the scriptures were not the rule of life and practice to Christians. 6. The speaking of the Spirit in any one, is of greater authority than the scriptures. 7. That is no command of God to me which God hath given to another; neither did any of the saints act by that command which is given to another; every one obeyed his own command. 8. That justification by that righteousness which Christ fulfilled for us wholly without us is a doctrine of devils. 9. That the Quakers hold justification by works in the strictest notion. 10. That Christ fulfilled the law only as our pattern. 11. That the doctrine of Christ's satisfaction is irreligious and irrational. 12. That this body which dies shall not rise again.

As to the second head or matters of practice, he charged them with saying, 1. That it concerns them to render their adversaries as ridiculous as they can, and to make their

friends believe they do nothing but contradict themselves; and if this fail, to insinuate something by way of question, that may slander them. 2. That they called such as asked them questions reprobates; and saying, they are in the sorcery and the witchcraft. 3. That William Penn, by the sense of the Eternal Spirit doth declare, that these cursings, railing, and lying answers of Edward Burroughs were the only fit answers to the priests trepanning questions. 4. They prefer their own pamphlets to the bible; for they call the one the voice of wisdom, breathings of true love, shield of faith, a spiritual glass, light risen out of darkness: but the scriptures are called letter, dead letter, paper, ink, and writing, carnal letter &c. 5. They bid people follow the light within, and if they do not, they revile them. 6. They say God himself is the immediate teacher of his people, and yet they appoint their minister to speak in a such a place. 7. They entitle God to sleeveless errands. 8. They refuse public meetings to debate the chief things in difference between them and others, under pretence that they are cautious about running theirs into jeopardy. 9. That they own the scriptures as far as it agrees with the light within. 10. That the light within created heaven and earth, and is the immediate object of divine worship. 11. That if these things objected in the two first dialogues be true, William Penn hath confessed a Quaker is not a Christian. 12. William Penn accuses me of forgery in saying he has these words, viz. That were we what he represents us, the worst plagues, and judgments of God would be our portion. Which are his own words, with this little alteration, that he sways, we might justly expect them to be our portion for ever. 13. William Penn charges me with a downright lie in giving this answer to John Whitehead_s name, viz. That the plagues and judgments of God will follow thee; though it is attested too under Mr. John Gladman_s own hand. 14. That their owning Christ is no other than a mere mystical romance; and that the light within them sees no necessity of a mediator. 15. Another lie William Penn charges me with is this; That the Quakers deny Christ_s visible coming, and appearance in the world. 16. That they account the blood of Christ but as the blood of a common thief; which though William Penn says is an ungodly aspersion, is fully made out. 17. That one of their friends bid her husband take another woman. 18. That a revelation hath been pretended to excuse the payment of a just debt. 19. That some of their friends have excused some of the villanics, by pretence of an innocent life.

Mr. Hicks produced authorities from their printed works, in justification of all these serious charges; excepting the last three, and concerning these proposed to the Quakers that if they would chuse six sober and disinterested persons, that he would do the same, and if he could not give sufficient reasons for what he had objected against them he would contentedly submit unto what these persons did determine.

The charges and proofs were submitted to the investigation of a number of ministers and others, who having examined them, gave the following Certificate.

_We whose names are under written do certify, that theaforesaid quotations are truly recited out of the books to which they refer. Witness our hands.

Daniel Dyke, Thomas Paul, Thomas Wilcocks, Jonathan Jennings, Owen Davis, William Dix, Robert Manton, Hansard Knollys, Henry Forty,

Robert Snelling, Thomas Plant, John Hunter, John Vernon, John Gosnold, John Norcott, Maurice King, Joseph Morton, John Snelling, Edward Noble.

_There were many more ministers and others ready to attest the same.

N.B. We have abbreviated the account by much. There was an advertisement giving notice, that Mr. William Kiffin was not present by reason of business; but that he had since examined and found the quotations just. William Kiffin.

Mr. Hicks having thus met at the time and place appointed, made it appear out of the Quakers own books, that he had not wronged them in the least. The church therefore to which he belonged, in public print cleared him from the Quakers_ charge, and declared to the world that they as yet see no just cause of blame to be laid upon Thomas Hicks; but if any one shall object any new matter against him, if they signify the particulars in writing, they will return such answers thereunto, as to them may seem just, and that may also be to the satisfaction of all indifferent and unprejudiced minds, hoping that nothing shall lie upon them in point of duty towards him, but that by the grace of God they shall be ready to do it.

William Kiffin, Thomas Paul, Henry Forty, Daniel Dyke, Hansard Knollys._

In the appeal which Mr. Obed Wills afterwards made to the Baptists against Mr. Danvers, he notices this decision, and says that _though the Quakers were disappointed as to the issue of their appeal yet it doth appear to all impartial and unprejudiced persons, that the Baptists have carried the whole business with a great deal of fairness and impartiality to both sides, as became just judges and good Christians, and vindicated the honesty of their brothers from the unjust aspersions of adversaries._

_The Quakers (says Crosby) exhibited a new complaint, in which they desired a rehearing of the whole matter, which at last was granted them. Wherein they behaved themselves so disorderly, as displeased the whole auditory; and finding themselves not able to get the better of the Baptists, being disappointed of the success they hoped for, appointed a meeting at their own house in Wheeler-Street; thither Mr. Hicks would not go, because they who had appealed were no fit judges to condemn in that case wherein they had appealed; but sent Mr. Ives thither with some others, who so managed the Quakers, that they were obliged to break up, without any further proceedings in the matter.

_Thomas Ellwood tells us, that he let fly a broad-side at the Baptists, in a single sheet of paper, under the title of a fresh pursuit. In which (says he) having restated the controversy between them and us, and reinforced our

charge of forgery, &c. against Thomas Hicks and his abettors; I offered a fair challenge to them, not only to Thomas Hicks himself, but to all those his compurgators, who had before undertaken to acquit him from our charge, together with their companion Jeremiah Ives, to give me a fair and public meeting, in which I would make good our charge against him as principal and all the rest of them as accessories; but nothing could provoke them to come fairly forth._

The Baptists published an account of the two last meetings between them and the Quakers, together with the occasions of them, as also the letters which passed in order thereunto. This was entitled *A Contest for Christianity*, with some reflections upon several passages that were published in the account which the Quakers gave of the said meetings. _This is submitted (says Crosby) to the judgment of all judicious and impartial men, and is too long to be inserted. It is thought probable that this was written by Mr. Daniel Dyke. [Crosby, vol. ii. p. 294-310.]

In the year 1683, very violent measures were adopted towards all denominations of dissenters, and several eminent Baptists became great sufferers. The information we possess respecting them will be found highly interesting. The first we mention is the famous Mr. Thomas Delaune, the champion of Nonconformity, on account of which he suffered great hardships in prison, where he died. The occasion of his sufferings was briefly as follows. -- Dr. Benjamin Calamy, rector of St. Lawrence Jewry, in one of his printed sermons entitled *A scrupulous Conscience*, invited the nonconformists to examine what each party had to say for themselves with respect to the ceremonies imposed by the church and enforced by the penal laws, and called upon them modestly to propose their doubts, and meekly to hearken to and receive instructions. In compliance with this, Mr. Delaune, who was a Baptist and a learned man, printed a *Plea for the Nonconformists*, shewing the true state of their case, and justifying their separation. But before it was published, he was apprehended by a messenger of the press, and shut up a close prisoner in Newgate by warrant from the Recorder Jenner, dated November 30, 1683.

During his confinement, Mr. Delaune published a narrative of his trial and sufferings, which was addressed to Doctor Calamy. In the title page we find the following scriptures, which show the state of his mind under his sufferings. Am I therefore become your enemy because I tell you the truth?--If thou seest the oppression of the poor, and violent perverting of judgment and justice in a province, marvel not at the matter, for He that is higher than the highest regardeth.--If you suffer for righteousness_ sake, happy are ye; and be not afraid of their terror, neither be ye troubled. Gal. 4:16; Eccles. 5:8; 1 Peter 3:14.

He informed Dr. Calamy, that when he was apprehended, he was sent by Jenner the recorder to Wood-Street Compter; _where (says he) I had most wretched accommodation. I was turned in among the common-side prisoners, where a hard bench was my bed, and two bricks my pillows; and I was not suffered to see some of my acquaintance who were prisoners there as dissenters. I was soon after sent to Newgate, and lodged among felons, whose horrid company made a perfect representation of that

place which you describe when you mention hell. But after two days and nights, without any refreshment, the unusualness of that society and place has impaired my health, the constitution of which at best is very tender and crazy, I was removed and am now in the press yard, a place of some sobriety, though still a prison._

While there, on December 8, he addressed a letter to Dr. Calamy, which he sent by the hands of his wife, representing how much he should suffer for attending to his request, and that the doctor was in honour bound to procure his sheets yet unfinished a public passport, and to him his liberty; _Else (says he) I must conclude it unfair, and that if the irresistible logic of gaol grow alamode, it will make the reformation some pretend to suspected to be very little meritorious of that name. Sir, I entreat you to excuse this trouble from a stranger, who would fain be convinced by something more like divinity than Newgate, where any message from you shall be welcome to your humble servant, Thomas Delaune._

To this the doctor replied, that if he had been imprisoned on account of answering his book, he would do him any kindness which became him: but this he never attempted, excusing himself as being no way concerned, for that the sheets he saw at the printer_s did not mention his name. This led him to write as follows. _I appeal to your conscience whether I had not some reason to expect some return to these applications? But I had none to any purpose, and that too but in a few words to my wife. I had some thoughts that you would have performed the office of a divine in visiting me in my place of confinement; either to argue me out of my doubts, which your promised SCRIPTURE and REASON, not a *mittimus* and *Newgate*, could easily do. To the former I *can* yield--to the latter, it seems, I *must*. This is a severe kind of logic, and will probably dispute me out of the world, as it did Mr. Bampffield and Mr. Ralphson lately, who were my dear and excellent companions in trouble, and whose absence I cannot but bemoan, as having lost in them a society that was truly pious, truly sweet, and truly amiable. But I hope the God of mercy will supply the want by a more immediate influence of comfort than what can be obtained at second hand._

He proceeds to give an account of his trial by saying, _On the tenth of December two bills were found against Mr. Ralphson and me by the grand jury of London, and on the thirtieth of the same month we were called to the sessions house in the Old Baily. Our indictments were then read in English, to which we pleaded not guilty. We desired copies of the said indictments, and time to make our defence till the next sessions, which the court after some pause granted. The substance of the indictment against me was as follows: _The jurors for our lord the king, upon their oath present that Thomas Delaune late of London, gentleman, not regarding his due allegiance, but contriving and intending to disquiet and disturb the peace and common tranquility of this kingdom, to bring the said lord the king into the greatest hate and contempt of his subjects; machining and further intending to move stir up and procure sedition and rebellion, and to disparage and scandalize the book of common prayer, &c.

_On the 30th of November, in the 35th year of the king, at London, in the parish of St. Botolph without Bishopgate, in the ward of Bishopsgate

aforesaid; by force and arms, unlawfully, seditiously, and maliciously did write, print, and publish, and caused to be written, printed, and published, a certain false seditious and scandalous libel of and concerning the said lord the king and the book of common prayer aforesaid, entitled *A Plea for the Nonconformists*.

_In which said libel are contained these false fictions and scandalous sentences following; viz. The church of _Rome and England who are great transgressors to presume to vary from Christ_s precept in altering or adding to the form of words expressed by Christ in the eleventh of Luke; for so they have done. They say, forgive us our trespasses as we forgive them who trespass against us, when there are no such words in Christ_s prayer: his words are, forgive us our sins or debts, for we also forgive every one that is indebted to us. And, says the indictment, in another part of the said libel are contained these false fictions, seditions and scandalous sentences following; viz. And may we not say that in these following particulars we do symbolize with idolatrous Rome herein? First, by enjoining and imposing this (here the indictment makes an imundo, meaning the book of common prayer) as a set form, as they do with penalties, contrary to the scriptures. Secondly, by an often repetition of the same form in the same exercise three or four times at least, insomuch that in cathedral churches it is said or sung ten or twelve times a day, contrary to Christ_s express words, that when we pray, we do not make vain repetitions as the heathens do, for they think they shall be heard for their much speaking. Thirdly by enjoining the whole congregation, men and women, to repeat the same after the priest, though no such directions by Christ: nay, he forbids women to pray or prophecy in the church. Fourthly, in singing this prayer in the cathedrals by responses of people without the least warrant from Christ for such song-praying. [Then the indictment ends with a fearful aggravation, that is] in contempt of the king, and to the evil and most pernicious example of all such other delinquents in the like case, and against the peace of the said lord now king, his crown and dignity &c. Signed, Wagstaffe.

_On the 16th of January (continues Mr. Delaune) we were called to the sessions-house; but there being some trials which proved very tedious, we were not brought on. The next day we were called to the outer bar, after the attendance of several hours in a place not very lovely, and in the sharpest winter you have known, which it is very likely carried my two friends beyond the jurisdiction of sessions, bale-docks, or press-yards, to a glorious mansion of rest.

_I desired that my indictment should be read in Latin, which was done. Here the gentlemen of the law aggravated things with their usual rhetoric. One of them, I think the attorney general, was pleased to say that the prisoner who stood there before (Mr. Ralphson was tried before me) did

labour to undermine the church: so that to incense the jury against us, he said, Here is *church* and *state* struck at. This, Sir, was improbable to be true, for it is wonderful that any church and state so potent as this is should fear such underminers as the extravagant harangue termed us. For my part, I cannot be righteously charged with any attempt against either, unless my obedience to you be so: and then if I be guilty, you that tempted me to it can never prove yourself innocent.

_Being desired to speak what I had to say for myself, I spoke the following words, which one who knew me took in short-hand, though without my knowledge.

_My Lord, last sessions I pleaded not guilty; that is, not guilty *modo et forma*; for I designed not *vi et armis*, to raise rebellion, sedition &c. I detest such things: he that swears in that respect against me must be perjured. The instances in the indictment relate no such thing. My Lord, I pray you to trouble no witnesses about me: I will not prevaricate. I have written some papers entitled, A Plea for the Nonconformists, not instigated by the feigned formalities in the indictment; but it was at the loud challenge of Dr. Calamy, one of the king_s chaplains; in his discourse upon scrupulous consciences, dedicated to your lordship; wherein he called upon doubting persons to examine what could be said on both sides, which I did. Now since public challenges are made to be answered, to punish me for obeying a guide of the church is hard, very hard.

_I desire that the entire paragraphs may be read, from which the crimes charged against me are inferred. If fragments only be produced, from which no perfect sense can be deduced, I shall be unfairly dealt with. The coherence of sense in a continued discourse, not scraps and broken pieces of sentences, can demonstrate the scope of an argument. If what I have written be true, it is no crime, unless truth be made a crime. If false, let Dr. Calamy or any of the guides of your church confute me (as he promised in his sermon aforesaid) by good scripture and good reason: then will I submit. If the latter method be not taken, I must repeat it, _tis very hard, my lord, _tis very hard.

_Here the chief justice interrupted me, addressing himself to the jury, and expounded that part of the sentence I excerpted against, saying, It was only for form sake, and that any breach of the peace in the sense of the law may be said to be *vi et armis*, by force and arms, with some other expressions to the same purpose: the latter of which I acknowledged. He then said, after a torrent of aggravation, Gentlemen, if you believe that men (pointing at me, and alluding to what I had confessed in writing the Nonconformist_s Plea) you must find him guilty of the whole indictment. And they readily did it accordingly.

_The next day I received my sentence, the very same with Mr. Ralphson_s. _Thomas Delaune fined a hundred marks, and to be kept prisoner &c., and to find good security for his good behaviour for one whole year afterwards; and that the said books and seditious libels by him published shall be burnt with fire before the Royal Exchange, London. And if he be discharged to pay six shillings. Signed, Wagstaffe._

_The Recorder then asked me some questions, viz. whether I was in orders? I told him, I was never in any ecclesiastical orders, nor ever preached among any people; that I was bred a scholar, and had been a schoolmaster, and kept a grammar school till forced from it by the present prosecutions &c.

_The court told both Mr. Ralphson and me, that in respect to our education as scholars we should not be pilloried, though we deserved it. We were sent back to our place of confinement, and the next execution day our books were burnt, as the sentence ordered it, in the place aforesaid, and we continue here. But since I wrote this, Mr. Ralphson has had his supersedeas by death to a better place.

Thus, Sir, you have a series of my circumstances. I will make no complaints of the usage I had when forced as aforesaid to lodge among the rabble of wretches, whose society seemed to me to be a hell upon earth, as before; nor of my other hardships, as confinement, loss of employment, loss of health, &c. But if you have any sense of humanity, you will recollect yourself, and procure me my freedom, being not able to pay my fine, lost by obedience to your public call.

When it is known that Mr. Delaune_s judge was the infamous Sir George Jeffries, it will not appear at all surprising that he should have been treated with such unjust severity: but it is really almost incredible that Dr. Calamy could read this address, and not be moved either by a sense of honour or humanity to procure his release.

The remaining part of this tragical story shall be related from the preface to the seventeenth edition of his work, written by the celebrated De Foe.

_Mr. Delaune continued in confinement in Newgate about fifteen months, and suffered great hardships by extreme poverty, being so entirely reduced by this disaster that he had no subsistence but what was contributed by such friends as came to visit him. His behaviour in this distress was like the greatness of mind which he discovered at his trial. And the same spirit which appears in his writings appeared in his conversation, and supported him with invincible patience under the greatest extremities. But long confinement and distresses of various kinds conquered him at last. He had a wife and two small children all with him in the prison, for they had no subsistence elsewhere. The closeness and inconvenience of the place first

affected them; and all three, by lingering sorrows and sickness, died in the prison! At last, worn out with troubles and hopeless of relief, and too much abandoned by those who should have taken some other care of him, this excellent person sunk under the burden, and died there also. I cannot refrain saying (adds De Foe) that such a champion of such a cause deserved better usage. And it was very hard that such a man, such a Christian, such a scholar, and on such an occasion, should starve in a dungeon; and that the whole body of dissenters in England, whose cause he died for defending, should not raise him the sum of *sixty-six pounds thirteen shillings and four-pence* to save his life!_

De Foe's opinion of the *Plea for Nonconformists* is thus expressed: _This book is perfect of itself. Never author left behind him a more finished piece, and I believe the dispute is entirely ended. If any man ask what we can say why the dissenters differ from the church of England, and what they can plead for it; I can recommend no better reply than this. Let them answer, in short, Thomas Delaune, and desire the querist to read the book._

He adds, _The treatment which the reverend and learned author of this book met with will ever stand as a monument of the cruelty of those times. They who affirm that the dissenters were never persecuted in England for their religion will do well to tell us what name we shall give to this man of merit, than whom few greater scholars, clearer heads, or greater masters of argument ever graced the English nation. I am sorry to say, he is one of the *eight thousand* protestant dissenters who perished in prison in the days of that merciful prince King Charles ii., and that merely for dissenting from the church, in points which they could give such reasons for as this *Plea* assigns; and for no other cause were stifled, I had almost said, murdered in gaols for their religion, in the days of those gentlemen's power who pretend to abhor persecution._

Mr. Delaune was born in Brini in Ireland, about three miles from Riggsdale. His parents were papists, and very poor. They rented part of the estate of Squire Riggs. This gentleman, observing the forward parts of young Delaune, placed him in a friary at Kilcrash, about seven miles from Cork, where he received his education. When he was about sixteen years of age, he left the friary, and went to Kingsale, where he met with Mr. Bampfield, who then had a pilchard fishery at that place. Finding Mr. Delaune a young man of good capacity and learning, he took him into his employment as a clerk, and was made the happy instrument of his conversion. He continued some years in great esteem and intimacy with Major Riggs and Mr. Bampfield, till he was forced by persecution to leave Ireland, and come to England. In Ireland he became acquainted with Mr. Edward Hutchinson, who was pastor of a congregation at Ormond, and at length married his daughter Hannah, with whom he came to London.

We find his name affixed with those of our London ministers of the Baptist denomination, to the reply to the appeal of Mr. Obed Wills, which he had made to them in reference to Mr. Danvers. He also wrote a preface to the work of Mr. Hutchinson on the covenants, and a Latin epistle in verse, prefixed to the same work in 1674. He was

also very intimate with Mr. Benjamin Keach, and compiled the *Philologia Sacra*, prefixed to his work on *Scripture Metaphors*.

In the course of this statement the names of Mr. Ralphson and Mr. Bampfield have been mentioned. The former of these, who was tried with Mr. Delaune, was a person of considerable learning and usefulness. Possessed of great courage, he would not desist from preaching in London, though several of his friends were committed to prison, among whom were Mr. Laurence Wise, Mr. Griffiths, and Mr. Bampfield. Sometimes he held his meetings at Founders Hall, and at others at Dyers Hall. He was at length taken and sent to Newgate, where he died at about the age of fifty-eight. As we shall have occasion to speak of him in another place, we defer any farther account of him here.

Mr. Edward Bampfield was the pastor of a seventh-day Baptist church which met at Pinnars Hall in Broad-Street; but as this place was very public, he did not long escape the notice and the rage of his persecutors. On February 17, 1682, when they were assembled in the forenoon at their usual hour, Mr. Bampfield being in the pulpit, a constable with his staff and several men with halberts rushed into the meeting. The constable commanded him in the king's name to come down: to which he answered that he was in the discharge of his office in the name of the King of kings. I have, said the constable, a warrant from the lord mayor to disturb your meeting I have a warrant from Jesus Christ, who is Lord Maximus, to go on, said Mr. Bampfield, and accordingly proceeded in his discourse. The constable then commanded one of the officers to pull him down. Upon which Mr. Bampfield repeated his text: the latter part of which was, The day of vengeance is in his heart, and the year of his redeemed is come. He added, He will pull down his enemies. They seized Mr. Bampfield and six of his people, and took them before the lord mayor. After examination by his lordship, they were fined ten pounds each, and desired to depart.

In the afternoon of the same day they went to their meeting-house again at the usual time. No sooner had Mr. Bampfield and a few of his friends entered the place than the officers came and shut the door to prevent those from entering who were coming in, and required those who were there immediately to disperse. Instead of attending to the mandate, they kept their places, and took this opportunity to tell the officers of the sin and disgrace of persecuting men on account of religion. They were all apparently affected with this address, and declared their unwillingness to engage in such a work, but said they were obliged to do it.

One of the people then demanded of the constable to produce his warrant for what he did; but he acknowledged that he had none, saying he would send to the lord mayor for one. Without any warrant, however, the constable commanded one of the officers to pull Mr. Bampfield down from the pulpit. After some time, with a pale face and trembling limbs, he took hold of him, and led him out into the street, where a great number of people were collected together. The constable fearing to proceed farther, Mr. Bampfield went with a large company to his own house, and performed worship, having been prevented from doing so in the meeting-house.

On the 24th of the same month they met again at Pinnars Hall, but had not been long assembled before another constable and several officers rushed in upon them. Mr. Bampfield was engaged in prayer, which he did not discontinue till one of the officers came and pulled him away. As he was going through the streets towards the lord mayor_s, he carried his bible in his hand, exposing it to the view of the people, who collected in great numbers; thus endeavouring to show that it was for the sake of Christ and his word that his liberty was taken away. The spectators as he passed were differently affected towards him. Some said he was a Christian jew: others said, See how he walks with his bible in his hand, like one of the old martyrs!

Being brought to the sessions, after examination, he and three more were sent to Newgate; and on March 17, 1685, he was brought to the bar with some others who had been committed for not taking the oath of allegiance and supremacy, when they were found guilty by the jury who were directed to do so by the judge. March 28, they were again brought to the bar to receive sentence. The Recorder without asking whether they would take the oaths, or whether they had any thing to say in their own defence, after casting many reflections on scrupulous consciences, read the following sentence: That they were out of the protection of the king_s majesty; that all their goods and chattels were forfeited; and that they were to remain in gaol during their lives, or during the king_s pleasure.

Mr. Bampfield would have spoken in reply; but there was a great uproar, crying, Away with them! Put them away from the bar: we will not hear them! While they were thrusting them away, Mr. Bampfield said, The righteous Lord loveth righteousness: the Lord be judge in this case! They were then returned to Newgate. The hardships which Mr. Bampfield endured soon brought him to his end. At his last trial he was kept ten hours in the bail-dock, a cold and disagreeable place. But he soon received his discharge; death performing that kind office for him in Newgate, to the great grief of his fellow-prisoners and a very numerous acquaintance. [Crosby, vol. ii. p. 355-361.]

Mr. Griffiths, a Baptist minister in London, was interrupted at his meeting-house several times, and on February 27, 1683, was sent to Newgate. The account of his trial was published by himself while in prison, and contains some important information respecting the restrictions they wished to lay upon them. It is as follows:--

_The case of Mr. John Griffiths, minister of the gospel, and now prisoner in Newgate: being a true and impartial account of what he spake at the sessions house in the Old Bailey, on April 18, 1683, before the Lord Chief Justice Saunders and three other judges, the Lord Mayor, Recorder, and several Aldermen of the city of London.

_On the day and year aforesaid, about four in the afternoon, Mr. Bampfield and myself were sent for by the court; and soon after we came, were first brought to the inward bar. Mr. Bampfield was first required to take the oath of allegiance, it being again tendered him according to the statute in the third of King Jams. After some discourse between the judges and the

Recorder had with Mr. Bampfild, he refusing to swear, they made an end at that time with him. The clerk of the peace, said to me, Take off your glove. I asked him, What to do? He answered, To lay your hand on the book, which he had in his hand, and held out to me. I then spake with a loud voice and said, My lord, I hope you will give me the liberty to speak for myself in my own defence. One of the judges replied that my friend, meaning Mr. Bampfild, had spoken for me, or to that effect. I said again that I desired to speak for myself, for I had other reasons to offer why I could not take that oath. Having liberty granted, as I took it from their silence, I with an audible voice said to them, I am commended in the scripture when I take an oath to swear in truth and judgment, and in righteousness, unto which the church of England doth agree. It is one article of their faith, (the 39th) that he who taketh an oath, being required of the magistrate, ought to swear, so that he do it in truth, in righteousness, and in judgment. Now for me to swear as my duty is according to the scripture, and as the church of England directs, I cannot, were I to take this oath; because I cannot know, but must be ignorant of, what I bind my soul to perform; and then it is impossible I should swear in truth, in judgment and in righteousness. I cannot know, but must be ignorant, both of what hereafter by law I may be required to do, and also to whom I swear to be obedience; for It is not possible I should foresee what laws may hereafter be made. I do not only bind my soul to obey the king that now is, but his heirs and successors also; and I know not what his successor may be. For aught I know he may be a popish successor, a papist; and I cannot swear to obey laws not yet in being, not to be obedient to a popish successor: therefore I cannot take the oath of allegiance.

_Upon these words there was a hum in the court, which being ceased, after a little pause, one of the judges made this short reply. Aye, saith he, doth he stick it there? I then went on and said, I cannot conform to the church of England. Should I take this oath, I swear to conform; for I am bound by my oath to obey all the king_s laws, as much those laws which respect the worship of God as those relating to civil government; and then I am sworn to hear common prayer once a month. Here one of the judges said, _So you are._ -- And to receive the sacrament with the church of England as often as the law requires; yea, and to conform to all the rites and ceremonies of the church. To this it was answered, _So you are._ -- And not to frequent private meetings any more; for there are laws that forbid it. It was answered again, _So you are._ -- Therefore I cannot take this oath.

_I then prayed all the judges to give me their opinions, whether it were as I had said or not. They answered with one consent that it was as I had said, viz. that in taking the oath I did swear to obey all the king_s laws without exception. Then I returned them thanks that they were pleased to give me their opinion and judgment in the case. And withal added these words: I am well satisfied and settled in my religion, and the more confirmed by

what you have said; and if it be so, do with me what you please. Come life, come death, the Lord assisting me, I will never take the oath of allegiance.

_Then I desired to speak a few words more, and said, BE it known unto you that I do not refuse to take the oath of allegiance in any dislike I have of any thing contained therein against the authority of the pope or the see of Rome, but do in all points therein with you agree. And further, I do declare that I do believe the pope hath no power, nor authority over the king_s person or government; no, nor over the meanest subject in his kingdom. And I do yet further declare, that I believe in my conscience, popery to be idolatrous, damnable, and devilish.

_I was then had back again to the press-yard, where I remain the Lord_s prisoner; and am ready further to hear my testimony for him, against antichrist, the pope, and see of Rome; and for his holy word, the purity of the gospel, and the ordinances thereof, against popish darkness, filthy idolatries, fornications, blasphemies, and abominations, and all traditions of men; as one made willing through the free mercy and rich grace of God, my heavenly Father, to forsake all for Christ, who hath loved me and given himself for me; not counting my life dear to myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God.

Thus have I given an account of what I spake, and what was said to me, to the very best of my memory, though it may not be word for word: yet for the substance of what was spoken, it is truth. John Griffiths.

We are not informed how Mr. Griffith_s imprisonment terminated, but it is probable that he was treated with severity, as it was his third offence, and it was fully expected when he was committed that the sentence of the law, which was banishment, would be inflicted.

Several other Baptist ministers suffered at this time. The venerable Hansard Knollys, now eighty-four years of age, had been in October 1684 about six or eight months in the new prison. It was credibly reported that a little time before he was imprisoned, a lord came to him from the court, and asked him whether he and his friends of his persuasion would accept of a toleration gladly. The excellent man replied, _I am old, and know but few men_s minds._ Being further pressed for an answer, he said, _I am of opinion that no liberty but what came by act of parliament would be very acceptable, because that would be stable, firm, and certain._ To such artful conduct did the court descend in order to make the dissenters wish for a toleration which would include the papists. It ought to be recorded to the honour of this apostolic man, that he preferred a prison to any concession that would affect the interest of the church of Christ. [M.S. penes me.]

Mr. Andrew Gifford before mentioned, being very zealous in his Master's work, met with much interruption at this period, as his enemies gladly embrace the opportunity of showing their envy and rage against him. To avoid their fury, he frequently preached in the forest of Kingswood, about three miles from Bristol, the place where the celebrated Whitfield and Wesley have since preached with so much success. The county magistrates hearing of it, were filled with great indignation; but a good providence preserved him from falling into their hands till the latter end of November 1680, when he was taken by a warrant signed by no less than thirteen of them, and sent to jail. He had been before imprisoned, but never for so long a period. There were many circumstances relating to this event which made it remarkable. His son Emanuel was placed as a watch to give notice of the approach of the informers: but in consequence of his being frozen to the ground on which he had sat down a few minutes to rest himself, and not being able to get free without cutting off the skirts of his new frieze coat, he was prevented from giving the alarm soon enough for his father to escape. A worthy Independent minister whose name is not preserved, was preaching at the same time in a neighbouring part of the wood; but in attempting to pass the rider to escape the informers he lost his life. The colliers hearing that Mr. Gifford was taken, collected in great numbers and came to him armed with bills and clubs and other rural weapons, and offered to rescue him out of their hands. But he refused, saying, That though he thought he might justly do all he could to prevent being seized, yet being now actually taken, and that by legal authority, he chose to submit to the law of the land, and leave his cause with God, who he doubted not would order all things for the best.

He was no sooner brought before one of the justices than his mittimus was made; but on representing that he had some affairs of importance to settle, and that his wife was far advanced in pregnancy, the justice dismissed him upon his parole of honour for two or three days, on Mr. Gifford's promising that he would surrender himself at the time appointed. He no sooner however arrived at home than the harpies came and seized him, and hurried him away to Gloucester castle, which was thirty miles distant, without any regard to the clemency of the magistrate, or inclemency of the season. He entered the gaol just as the chimes rung at midnight. This circumstance is mentioned because it was afterwards remarkably overruled for good. While he was in prison, he with several other ministers performed worship with the prisoners, and a great reformation was wrought especially among the felons. In the mean time his enemies, to prevent him preaching any more in public, procured an order from court, by means of the Duke of York, afterwards King James II. to confine him there for life; but the Lord rendered all their designs abortive, and taught them that wherein they dealt proudly he was above them, and could take the wise in their own craftiness. When the six months mentioned in the mittimus had expired, Mr. Gifford desired the keeper to dismiss him, who answered, that it was not usual to open the gates at midnight. He replied, that they were opened to let him in, and therefore why should they not be to let him out? Seconding his demand with a more powerful argument, being apprized of his enemies' design, he was discharged at the same hour as when he came in, namely, at twelve o'clock at night. The next morning at six o'clock the express arrived from London with an order to confine him during life. Thus his being hurried to prison before his parole had expired was probably the occasion of his being dismissed before the order came. This was his last imprisonment, as he ever

after kept out of the way of his enemies, or at least was protected by the care of his divine Master whom he constantly and faithfully served.

While Mr. Gifford was in prison he sent the following letter, now in the possession of Mr. Whittuck of Bristol, and published in the *Protestant Dissenters Magazine*. This was addressed to Mr. Edward Grant of Trowbridge, and is dated Gloucester Castle, April 14, 1684.

_Dear Friend,

_My dear love to you and your wife, with many and hearty thanks to God and you for the exceeding great love, both in provoking others to such liberality, and taking so great a journey to visit, and bestowing so great a benefit on me which I can never requite; but my prayer is, and shall be, that it may be trebled to you again, and that divine blessings may descend on you and yours, and that you may never want any mercy either for time or eternity; but may have that grace, which may keep you faithful to what you know, and enable you to do what God does require, and contentedly and cheerfully endure whatever in so doing you may suffer; your peace of conscience, the welfare of your immortal soul, the pleasure and honour of God, is to be preferred before goods, liberty, or life itself; therefore with purpose of heart let us cleave to the Lord, then are we secure for our spiritual and eternal welfare; O love God more than creatures, fear him more than men, and sin more than sufferings; do not buy your peace with soul-wounding defilements, be faithful unto death, and then you shall have that crown of life which will make amends for all, and then I am sure you will never repent neither service nor suffering; and though you may fear how you shall be able to stand, yet consider God is able to make you stand, his grace is sufficient, his strength is made perfect in the creature's weakness; cry to, and rely upon him; use all honest means to preserve yourself, and to prevent your enemies; use the wisdom of the serpent, but be sure to keep the innocency of the dove.--Seek and depend alone on God, in God's wisdom to council, power and strength to defend, or support and supply all our wants of nature and grace, and in due time give a glorious deliverance; _it is good both to hope and quietly wait for his salvation;_ but sure you do not comply with any thing you are not satisfied is God's will, or you should be loth to hear of in that great day. I had rather if God is pleased to help me, abide in bonds, and in the worst that can be done by my enemies, than do the least evil for deliverance. Pray for me, as I for you; so committing you to him who is able to keep you from falling, and present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy, I rest your loving friend under manifold obligations.

Andrew Gifford.

Pray take care to deliver the inclosed letter, you may read it to the congregation, by which you will understand what was done at sessions. Remember my love to brother Cray with thanks for his kindness.
[*Protestant Dissent. Mag.* vol. i. p. 498.]

We must now return to the year 1675, when many professions were made in the House of Lords of respect for the protestant dissenters, and the duke of Buckingham proposed to bring in *a bill of indulgence*. Though this was doubtless a pretext to encourage popery, yet it is probable the Baptists were willing to take the opportunity it afforded them of devising means to promote the interest of the denomination. In proof of this we find that the London ministers addressed a circular letter to the churches both in England and Wales, inviting their brethren of the Baptist persuasion to meet the following May in the metropolis with a view to form a plan for the providing an orderly standing ministry in the church, who might give themselves to reading and study, and so become able ministers of the new testament. The letter bore date the 2d of the 8th month 1675, and was signed by most of the London pastors, among whom were Daniel Dyke, William Collins, and William Kiffin.

We know not what was the result of this proposal, but it is probable the severity of persecution against the Nonconformists prevented their meeting. It however proves that the learned men who were amongst the Baptists, and pastors of their churches were very desirous of providing a learned ministry, which could not now be expected without establishing seminaries of their own, as the universities and public schools were shut against them.

At the close of this year we find there were some disputes amongst the Baptist ministers in the west of England respecting the *obligations of unconverted men to pray*. Mr. Andrew Gifford, the pastor of the church at Pithay, Bristol, seems to have been acquainted with some ministers who were of the opinion that as none could pray acceptably without the influences of the Holy Spirit, and unconverted men being destitute of these influences, that therefore it was not their duty to pray, nor the duty of ministers to exhort them to seek for spiritual blessings. This excellent man, who was of a different sentiment, being very fond of the free invitations of the gospel to sinners, as appears by the sermon preached at his funeral, and wishing to obtain information on this subject, and some other points debated between them, addressed a letter to Mr. Joseph Morton, a Baptist minister in London, requesting it should seem that he would submit it to the rest of the ministers, and obtain their opinion on the subject. The letter addressed to him on this occasion is so clear and satisfactory, and so descriptive of the sentiments of many of our ministers, that we with great pleasure give it a place in our work.

London 18th of the 11th month [Jan. 18] 1675.

_Dear brother Gifford,

_We had a sight of your letter to brother Morton, and are not a little grieved to hear of those differences among you, and the more that they

should be on such grounds as you mention, which can have no other tendency than to render us contemptible to all serious and judicious persons.

_Prayer is a part of that homage which every man is obliged to give to God; _tis a duty belonging to natural, and not only to instituted religion, which is fully intimated in Acts 17:26,27. Whatever in that text is meant by seeking, prayer cannot (by any just reason) be excluded, and if prayer be intended, _tis comprehensive of all mankind. It cannot be supposed that man being such a creature as he is should not be obliged to love, fear, and obey God. _Tis so far from us to esteem them the most zealous Christians, that we account them scarce worthy to be reckoned amongst the number of mankind, that will not acknowledge worship due to the common Author of their beings; for he that denies this, must at once deny a deity, and himself to be a man.

If hereunto it be objected, that such persons have not the spirit, therefore ought not to pray; this objection is not cogent, forasmuch as neither the want of the spirits immediate the motions to, or its assistance in the duty, doth not take off the obligation to the duty. If it would, then also from every other duty; and consequently all religion be cashiered. If the obligations to this and other duties were suspended merely for want of such motions and assistance, then unconverted persons are so far from sinning in the omission of such duties, that it is their duty to omit them. _Tis certain no man can, without the assistance of the Holy Spirit, either repent or believe; yet it will not therefore follow, that impenitency and unbelief are no sins; if these be sins, then the contrary must be their duty. It cannot be their sin to cry to God for the assistance of his Spirit to enable them thereunto. If a duty be no duty to us, except we be immediately moved to it; then whether sin doth not cease to be a sin, if the Spirit do not immediately hinder us from it; and thus by the same reason we may omit a duty, we may likewise commit a sin; and hereby that great rule of duty God hath given unto men to walk by, is wholly made void, or at least allowed to be but a rule only at some certain times, viz. when the Spirit immediately moves us to the observance of it; till then it hath no authority to oblige us: and so every man is sinless, whatever sin be committed, or whatever duty be neglected, if the Spirit do not immediately hinder us from the one and move us to the other.

_Moreover the design of the objection doth as effectually discourage such as are under doubts and desertions, from this duty, as any other person; and thus it would be as that great enemy to the souls of men would have it, namely, that there should be but very few in the world to acknowledge God in this solemn part of his worship: whereas all men are obliged to acknowledge him as the fountain of all goodness; and themselves to be dependent creatures on him, and therefore to supplicate him for those

blessings whereof they stand in need: or otherwise it must follow, that they have no wants, and are not dependent on him, but are all-sufficient: or if they be under the sense of wants, and of their dependence, by seeking unto God for the bettering their conditions: but they be obliged hereunto, not only from those innate notions they have of God in their minds, but by the express revelations of the Divine will in the holy scriptures. Christianity improves and rectifies, but it doth not abolish our reason; it helps to better mediums and motives to perform our service to God, but it doth not in any wise make void that which was a duty before.

_If yet it be objected, that an unregenerated person fails in the due manner of the performance of this duty, therefore he ought not to pray; nor to be joined with in prayer; We answer--the defect in the manner (though a sin) doth not discharge the person from the obligation; for still it is his duty to pray: _tis true there are such directions given in the holy scriptures as to the right performance of this duty, which the mere light of nature could not give; yet the duty itself of invoking God is so agreeable to the universal reason and sentiments of mankind, that there is nothing spoken of this in the scriptures but which doth suppose it previously to be a duty: therefore, unless we suppose that the law of nature is totally obliterated, we must conclude that mankind are under an obligation to this duty. But if a failure in the manner doth take off this obligation, then every unconverted person is sinless, if he totally neglect this and *every other duty*. Yea, every Christian, when under deadness and distractions is discouraged from this duty; and thus a door would be opened to all manner of wickedness and irreligion in the world. Again, as the aforesaid defect doth not discharge the person himself from the duty, neither are we so far concerned therein, as thereby, to derive guilt and pollution to ourselves, in case we should join in prayer with such a person; for if it would, then may we not communicate in duty with any person of whose sincerity we are not assured. But where such an assurance is made necessary to our discharge of those duties which jointly are to be performed with others, we know not: much more might have been added, but we consider what herein is said may suffice. This with our earnest desires that the God of all grace would be with you, to establish you in every good word and work, and to make your love to each other abound in all knowledge and judgment, &c. -- We subscribe ourselves,

_Your very affectionate brethren,

_In the fellowship of the Gospel,

William Kiffin, Hansard Knollys, Daniel Dyke, Laurence Wise, Henry Forty, William Collins, Nehemiah Coxe, James Jones, Thomas Hicks, Joseph Morton, James Hycrigg, Robert Snelling, Thomas Hopgood.

In the year 1677, there was an assembly of the pastors and elders of the Baptist churches both in London and the country. It is probable they met in London in consequence of the letter which was sent in October 1676, requesting them to meet the next year to take into consideration a plan to provide a standing orderly ministry in the church, &c. We have no account of what they did in respect to a learned ministry, but they agreed to set forth *a Confession of Faith said to be done by the Elders and Brethren of many congregations of Christians (baptized upon profession of their faith) in London and the country*. The motto is *_With the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation._* Rom. 10:10. *_Search the scriptures._* John 5:39. Printed in the year, 1677.

There are no names to this confession, but it is the same precisely as was afterwards recommended by the general assembly in 1689, when they could meet without fear, and publish the minutes of their proceedings, with their names affixed to their resolutions. There is an address *to the judicious and impartial reader*, which we think worth transcribing. This is as follows:--

_Courteous Reader,

_It is now many years since divers of us (with other sober Christians then living and walking in the way of the Lord that we profess) did conceive ourselves to be under a necessity of publishing a confession of our faith, for the information and satisfaction of those that did not thoroughly understand what our principles were, or had entertained prejudices against our profession, by means of the strange representation of them, by some men of note, who had taken very wrong measures, and accordingly led others into misapprehensions, of us and them: and this was first put forth about the year 1643, in the name of seven congregations then gathered in London; since which time, divers impressions thereof have been dispersed abroad, and our end proposed in good measure answered, inasmuch as many (and some of those men eminent both for piety and learning) were thereby satisfied, that we were no way guilty of those heterodoxies and fundamental errors, which had too frequently been charged upon us without ground or occasion given on our part. And forasmuch as that confession is not now commonly to be had; and also that many others have since embraced the same truth which is owned therein, it was judged necessary by us to join together in giving a testimony to the world, of our firm adhering to those wholesome principles, by the publication of this which is now in your hand.

_And forasmuch as our method and manner of expressing our sentiments in this, doth vary from the former (although the substance of the matter is the same) we shall freely impart to you the reason and occasion thereof. One thing that greatly prevailed with us to undertake this work, was (not only to give a full account of ourselves to those Christians who differ from us about the subject of Baptism, but also) the profit that might from thence

arise unto those that have any account of our labours in their instruction and establishment in the great truths of the gospel; in the clear understanding and steady belief of which, our comfortable walking with God, and fruitfulness before him, in all our ways is most nearly concerned; and therefore we did conclude it necessary to express ourselves the more fully and distinctly; and also to fix on such a method as might be most comprehensive of those things which we designed to explain our sense, and belief of; and finding no defect in this regard, in that fixed on by the assembly, and after them by those of the congregational way, we did readily conclude it best to retain the same order in our present confession: and also when we observed that those last mentioned, did in their confession (for reasons which seemed of weight both to themselves and others) choose not only to express their mind in words concurrent with the former in sense, concerning all those articles wherein they were agreed, but also for the most part without any variation of the terms, we did in like manner conclude it best to follow their example in making use of the very same words with them both, in these articles (which are very many) wherein our faith and doctrine is the same with theirs, and this we did the more abundantly to manifest our consent with both, in all the fundamental articles of the Christian religion, as also with many others, whose orthodox confessions have been published to the world; on the behalf of the protestants in divers nations and cities: and also to convince all that we have no itch to clog religion with new words, but do readily acquiesce in that form of sound words, which hath been in consent with the holy scriptures, used by others before us; hereby declaring before God, angels, and men, our hearty agreement with them, in that wholesome protestant doctrine, which with so clear evidence of scriptures they have asserted: some thing indeed, are in some places added, some terms omitted, and some few changed, but these alterations are of that nature as that we need not doubt any charge or suspicion of unsoundness in that faith, from any of our brethren upon the account of them.

_In those things wherein we differ from others, we have expressed ourselves with all candour and plainness that none might entertain jealousy of ought secretly lodged in our breasts, that we would not the world should be acquainted with; yet we hope we have also observed those rules of modesty and humility, as will render our freedom in this respect inoffensive, even to those whose sentiments are different from ours.

_We have also taken care to affix texts of scripture in the margin for the confirmation of each article in our confession, in which work we have studiously endeavoured to select such as are most clear and pertinent, for the proof of what is asserted by us: and our earnest desire is, that all into whose hands this may come, would follow that (never enough commended) example of the noble Bereans, who searched the scriptures

daily, that they might find out whether the things preached to them were so or not.

_There is one thing more which we sincerely profess, and earnestly desire credence in, viz. That contention is most remote from our design in all that we have done in this matter: and we hope the liberty of an ingenuous unfolding our principles, and opening our hearts unto our brethren, with the scripture grounds on which our faith and practice leans, will by none of them be either denied to us, or taken ill from us. Our whole design is accomplished, if we may obtain that justice, as to be measured in our principles, and practice, and judgment of both by others, according to what we have now published; which the Lord (whose eyes are as a flame of fire) knoweth to be the doctrine, which with our hearts we must firmly believe and sincerely endeavour to conform our lives to. And oh that other contentions being laid asleep, the only care and contention of all upon whom the name of our blessed Redeemer is called, might for the future be to walk humbly with their God, and in the exercise of love and meekness towards each other, to perfect holiness in the fear of the Lord, each one endeavouring to have his conversation such as becometh the gospel; and also suitable to his place and capacity vigorously to promote in others the practice of true religion and undefiled in the sight of God and our Father. And that in this backsliding day, we might not spend our breath in fruitless complaints of the evils of others; but may every one begin at home, to reform in the first place our own hearts and ways; and then to quicken all that we may have influence upon to the same work; that if the will of God were so none might deceive themselves, by resting in and trusting to a form of godliness without the power of it, and inward experience of the efficacy of those truths that are professed by them.

_And verily there is one spring and cause of the decay of religion in our day, which we cannot but touch upon, and earnestly urge a redress of; and that is the neglect of the worship of God in families, by those to whom the charge and conduct of them is committed. May not the gross ignorance and instability of many, with the profaneness of others, be justly charged upon their parents and masters, who have not trained them up in the way wherein they ought to walk when they were young, but have neglected those frequent and solemn commands which the Lord hath laid upon them so to catechize and instruct them, that their tender years might be seasoned with the knowledge of the truth of God as revealed in the scriptures; and also by their own omission of prayer and other duties of religion in their families, together with the ill example of their loose conversation, have inured them first to a neglect, and then contempt of all piety and religion? We know this will not excuse the blindness or wickedness of any; but certainly it will fall heavy upon those that have thus been the occasion thereof; they indeed die in their sins; but will not their blood be required of those under whose care they were, who yet permitted them to go on

without warning, yea led them into the paths of destruction? And will not the diligence of Christians with respect to the discharge of these duties in ages past, rise up in judgment against, and condemn many of those who would be esteemed such now?

We shall conclude with our earnest prayer, that the God of all grace will pour out those measures of his Holy Spirit upon us, that the profession of truth may be accompanied with the sound belief and diligent practice of it by us: that his name may in all things be glorified, through Jesus Christ our Lord, Amen. [Confession of Faith of 1677.]

To this Confession which is well known, an Appendix is added, from which we make the following extract.--

_Whosoever reads and impartially considers what we have in our foregoing confession declared, may readily perceive that we do not only concur with all other true Christians on the word of God (revealed in the scriptures of truth) as the foundation and rule of our faith and worship; but that we have also industriously endeavoured to manifest, that in the fundamental articles of Christianity we mind the same things, and have therefore expressed our belief in the same words, that have on the like occasion been spoken by other societies of Christians before me.

_This we have done, that those who are desirous to know the principles of religion which we hold and practise, may take an estimate from ourselves (who jointly concur in this work) and may not be misguided, either by undue reports, or by the ignorance or errors of particular persons, who, going under the name with ourselves, may give an occasion of scandalizing the truth we profess.

_And although we do differ from our brethren who are Paedobaptists in the subject and administration of Baptism, and such other circumstances as have a necessary dependence on our observance of that Ordinance, and do frequent our own assemblies for our mutual edification, and the discharge of those duties and services which we owe unto God, and in his fear to each other; yet we would not be from hence misconstrued, as if the discharge of our own consciences herein did any way disoblige or alienate our affections of conversation from any others that fear the Lord; but that we may and do as we have opportunity participate of the labours of those, whose God hath indued with abilities above ourselves, and qualified and called to the ministry of the word, earnestly desiring to approve ourselves to be such as follow after peace with holiness: and therefore we always keep that blessed Irenicum, or healing word of the apostle, before our eyes; If in any thing ye be otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this unto you; nevertheless whereto we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule, let us mind the same thing, Phil. 3:15,16.

_Let it not therefore be judged of us (because much hath been written on this subject, and yet we continue this our practice different from others) that it is out of obstinacy, but rather as the truth is, that we do herein according to the best of our understandings worship God, out of a pure mind yielding obedience to his precept, in that method which we take to be most agreeable to the scriptures of truth, and primitive practice.

_It would not become us to give any such intimation, as should carry a semblance that what we do in the service of God is with a doubting conscience, or with any such temper of mind that we do thus for the present with a reservation that we will do otherwise hereafter upon more mature deliberation; nor have we any cause so to do, being fully persuaded that what we do is agreeable to the will of God. Yet we do heartily propose this, that if any of the servants of our Lord Jesus Christ shall, in the spirit of meekness, attempt to convince us of any mistake either in judgment or practice, we shall diligently ponder his arguments; and account him our chief friend that shall be an instrument to convert us from any error that is in our ways, for we cannot wittingly do any thing against the truth, but all things for the truth.

_And therefore we have endeavoured seriously to consider what hath been already offered for our satisfaction in this point: and are loth to say any more lest we should be esteemed desirous of renewed contests thereabout: yet forasmuch as it may justly be expected that we shew some reason, why we cannot acquiesce in what hath been urged against us, we shall with as much brevity as will consist with plainness, endeavour to satisfy the expectation of those that shall peruse what we now publish in this matter also.

_1. As to those Christians who consent with us that repentance from dead works, and faith towards God and our Lord Jesus Christ, is required in persons to be baptized; and do therefore supply the defect of the infant being incapable of making confession of either by others who do undertake these things for it. Although we do find by church history that this hath been a very ancient practice; yet considering that the same scripture which does caution us against censuring our brother, with whom we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ, does also instruct us, that every one of us shall give an account of himself to God, and whatsoever is not of faith is sin. Therefore we cannot for our own parts be persuaded in our own minds, to build such a practice as this upon an unwritten tradition: but do rather choose in all points of faith and worship, to have recourse to the holy scriptures for the information of our judgment and regulation of our practice; being well assured that a conscientious attending thereto is the best way to prevent and rectify our defects and errors. 2 Tim. 3:16,17. And if any such case happen to be debated among Christians which is not plainly determinable by the scripture, we think it

safest to leave such things undecided until the second coming of our Lord Jesus; as they did in the church of old, until there should arise a priest with Urim and Thummim, that might certainly inform them of the mind of God thereabout, Ezra 2:62,63.

_2. As for those our Christian brethren who do ground their arguments for Infant Baptism upon a presumed federal holiness, or church-membership, we conceive they are deficient in this, that albeit this covenant holiness and membership should be as is supposed in reference unto the infants of believers; yet no command for infant baptism does immediately and directly result from such a quality or relation.

All instituted worship receives its sanction from the precept, and is to be thereby governed in all the necessary circumstances thereof, &c.
[Appendix, p. 109-115.]

During the remaining part of this king_s reign, _the persecution of the nonconformists was continued and carried on (says Neal) to a pitch hardly to be paralleled in a protestant nation. Doctor Barlow, bishop of Lincoln, published a letter for putting the laws in execution against the dissenters, in concurrence with another drawn up by the justices of the peace at Bedford, bearing date January 14, 1684. Many were cited into the spiritual courts, excommunicated, and ruined. Two hundred warrants of distress were issued out upon private persons and families in the town and neighbourhood of Uxbridge, for frequenting conventicles, or not coming to church._

The Baptists appear to have had their full share in the sufferings of these times. On November 19, 1682, the goods of Mr. Collins, a Baptist minister in London, were distrained by the officers breaking open the doors and entering the house. There were at this time latent convictions besides those that were executed against most of the Baptists distrained upon to the amount of one, two, or three hundred pounds each. We hear of no instance of improper conduct, excepting that of a man of the name of Warrman, a weaver, who told Jeffries that _he should recollect that he himself had been brought as an offender before the supreme court of the kingdom, and had seen the temper and gravity of many courts._ Perhaps this was improper; but it was doubtless the effect of the passionate and illegal conduct of this drunken and dissolute judge, who violated every principle of justice and religion. The monarch by whom these shocking practices were enforced, or at least connived at, fell a victim to the king of terrors, February 6, 1684--5, in the fifty-fourth year of his age. It was strongly suspected that he was poisoned, as the body was not suffered to be thoroughly examined.

_The king (says Burnet) had a great many vices, and but few virtues to correct them. Religion was with him nothing more than an engine of state. He hated the Nonconformists because they appeared against the prerogative, and received the fire of all the enemies of the constitution and protestant religion with an unshaken firmness. His majesty_s chief concern at last was for his brother_s succession; and when he came to die,

he showed no remorse for an ill-spent life. Not a word of religion was heard from him; no tenderness for his subjects, nor concern for his queen; but only a recommendation of his mistresses and their children to his brother. No Englishman or lover of his country could wish for the life of such a prince from any other motive than his keeping out a successor who was worse than himself._

VOLUME I.

CHAP. X.

1685 - 1700.

James II, the Duke of York, succeeded to the throne [he ruled from 1685-1688], and began his reign with a frank and open declaration of his religion. The first Lord_s day after his accession he went publicly to mass, and obliged Father Huddleston, who attended the late king in his last hours, to declare to the world that he died a Roman Catholic.

The parliament fell in with all the king_s measures; and to gratify his passion of revenge against those who had been averse to his accession on account of his religion, they presented an address to his majesty, May 27, to desire him to issue forth his royal proclamation to put the penal laws into execution against dissenters from the church of England. The opposition to them now became as severe as it ever had been in the late king_s reign, and the rebellion of the Duke of Monmouth gave the court a plausible reason for carrying it to the greatest extremity. There is no doubt but many dissenters engaged in this ill-timed and ill-fated expedition, which terminated in the destruction of almost all who engaged in it. Amongst those of the Baptist denomination who were actively employed, were the grandfather and father of the late Dr. Gifford of Eagle Street, London. In a copy of the Western Martyrology which belonged to him, and which is now in the library at Bristol, is the following account in the Doctor_s hand writing.

_The Rev. Andrew Gifford (my grandfather) was with several others in the city of Bristol deeply engaged in the affair of the Duke of Monmouth. He collected a considerable sum, and provided ammunition. And when the Duke came near the city, he sent his son Emanuel to Knowl Castle, a mile out of the city, to invite the Duke and his friends in; assuring him that there were many friends and supplies provided, and that a part of the city walls was undermined to let them in with ease and safety. But the Duke of Beaufort, the Lord Lieutenant, having set fire to a ship in the harbour, and sent the Duke of Monmouth word that if he attempted the city he would burn it down, the Duke, seeing the flames, called a council of war, in which it was resolved to prevent the city from being destroyed. And thus

being betrayed by those about him, especially Lord -----, he desired my father to return his thanks to his friends, but, the council having determined otherwise, he should remove into the west, and earnestly desired my father to accompany him; which my father, perceiving that the Duke was betrayed, civilly refused, telling him he must now return as his commission was at an end. Accordingly he rode round near Carnsham bridge; but as he was going through Kingswood a friend met him, and asked him what he did there, telling him the plot was discovered, and that his errand to the Duke of Monmouth was publicly known, and a troop of horse was sent out to take him, and therefore bid him shift for his life. On hearing this he took off the saddle and bridle and turned his mare loose in the wood, and hid himself in a great bush near the highway side, where he had not been more than a quarter of an hour before the troop came by, swearing if they could catch the heretical dog they would cut him as small as herbs for the pot; but missing their prey, a little before night they returned the same way, on which my father caught his mare, and as soon as it was dark returned home safe and kept out of the way for some time. He was a melancholy witness of the sufferings of five or six executed without Radcliff-Gate on the account of it, but lived to share in the joy of the Prince of Orange's arrival. The first news of whose embarkation at Helveotsloys was brought to Bristol by his brother Samuel Gifford, who sailed the very night before the prince; who entreated him to be his pilot through the channel, which he excused himself from lest it should ----- his cargo._

This circumstance accounts for the virulence with which Jefferies addressed the Grand Jury at Bristol in his return from the Western Campaign. _Certainly (said he) they had and must have great encouragement from a party within, or else why should their design be on this city?--Gentlemen, I tell you, I have the Kalender of this city here in my hand; I have heard of those that have searched into the very sink of a Conventicle to find out some sneaking rascal to hide their money. Come, come, gentlemen to be plain with you, I find the dirt of the ditch is in your nostrils.--It seems the Dissenters and Phanaticks fare well amongst you, by reason of the favour of the magistrates; for example, if a dissenter who is a notorious and obstinate offender, comes before them to be fined, one Alderman or other stands up, and says, he is a good man, (though three parts a rebel) well then for the sake of Mr. Alderman he shall be fined but five shillings, &c._ The six persons who suffered on Radcliff Hill were, Richard Evans, John Tinckwell, Christopher Clerk, Edward Tippet, Philip Cambridge, and John Tucker, alias Glover. [Western Martyr, p. 264,268.]

In a work published by Mr. Hercules Collins of Wapping, in the year 1691, he remarks, _It is well known that many good men of most persuasions, of the church of England, Presbyterians, Independants, and Baptists, were zealously concerned in the Duke of Monmouth's time, and

many fell. But know that victory is no argument of the best cause, nor best men; nor a defeat an argument of a bad cause, and bad men. No better men in the world than some who fell in the Duke's cause, in the west; yet by the hands of one of the most debauched armies that ever was in the world.--No greater stigma attaches to the adherents of the Duke of Monmouth, than would have attached to those of the Prince of Orange had he been equally unsuccessful.

Amongst the Baptists that fell, we are acquainted with two persons who, on account of their connections, deserve a place in our work. These were Mr. Benjamin and Mr. William Hewling, two brothers, whose characters and tragical end made a very great impression on the minds of the people of England. Noble, in his history of the Protectoral house of Cromwell, gives the following account of them. _These two amiable but unfortunate gentlemen were the only sons of Mr. Benjamin Hewling, a Turkey merchant of good fortune in London, who happily for himself died before them. After their father's death they were most carefully brought up by a tender mother, and their maternal grandfather, Mr. William Kiffin, who though very much advanced in years, as well as his wife, survived them both. The Hewlings and Kiffins were protestant dissenters, and the latter, if not the former, were Anabaptists._ [Vol. ii. p. 451.]

The excellent Mr. William Kiffin has left a manuscript account of his life, written when he was in his 77th year, for the use of his descendants, in which he has given a particular account of his grandsons. From this manuscript we extract the following information respecting them.--_Not long after the king died and James II. coming to the crown, the summer after his coming the Duke of Monmouth with a party came over with a few armed men that landed at Lyme, and I having a young grandson, William Hewling, at board and school in Holland, came over with him, although unknown to me or any of his friends, he being about the age of nineteen years.--And his eldest brother, Benjamin Hewling, conversing with those that were under great dissatisfaction, seeing popery encouraged and religion and liberty like to be invaded, did furnish himself with arms, and went to the said Duke and in the first fight, being afterwards both taken prisoners, were brought to Newgate, which to me was no small affliction. And it being given out that the king would make only some few that were taken examples, and the rest would leave to his officers to compound for their lives; I endeavoured with his mother to treat with a great man, and agreed to give three thousand pounds for their lives. But the face of things were soon altered, so that nothing but severity could be expected, and indeed we missed the right door; for the Lord Chief Justice finding agreements made with others, and so little to himself, was the more provoked to use all manner of cruelty to the poor prisoners, so that few escaped. Amongst the rest these two young men were executed. But how graciously the Lord shewed himself to them, both in their behaviour

before their trial and at their deaths, the consideration thereof to such as please to peruse it; I think it may be of use to leave to you and to your children, and to such as may read the same which is as followeth.

_The gracious dealings of God manifested to some in dying hours have been of great advantage to those living that have heard the same giving them occasion thereby to reflect on their own state, and to look after the things of their peace before they be hid from their eyes; also a great encouragement to strengthen the faith of those that have experienced the grace of God to them.

_To that end _tis thought necessary, by parents especially, to their children that remain, those blessed experiences that such have had which God hath taken to himself.

_Here therefore is presented a true account of the admirable appearances of God towards two young men; Mr. Benjamin Hewling, who died when he was about twenty-two years of age, and Mr. William Hewling, who died before he arrived to twenty years. They engaged with the Duke of Monmouth, as their own words were, for the English liberties, and the protestant religion, and for which Mr. William Hewling was executed at Lyme, the 12th of September 1685; and Mr. Benjamin Hewling at Taunton, the 30th of the same month; and however severe men were to them, yet the blessed dispensation of God to them was such, as hath made good his word, that out of the mouth of babes he hath ordained strength, that he may still the enemy and avenger.

_After the dispersing of the Duke_s army they fled and put to sea, but were driven back again, and with the hazard of their lives got ashore (over dangerous rocks) where they saw the country filled with soldiers, and they being unwilling to fall into the hands of the rabble, and no way of defence or escape remaining to them, they surrendered themselves prisoners to a gentleman whose house was near the place where they landed at, and were from thence sent to Exeter goal, the 12th of July, where remaining some time, their behaviour was such, that (being visited by many) caused great respect towards them, even of those that were enemies to the cause they engaged in, and being on the 27th of July put on board the Swan Frigate, in order to their bringing up to London, their carriage was such as obtained great kindness from their commander, and all other officers in the ship, and being brought into the river, Captain Richardson came and took them into custody, and carried them to Newgate, putting great irons upon them, and put them apart from each other, without giving liberty for the nearest relation to see them, notwithstanding all endeavours and entreaties used to obtain it, though in the presence of a keeper; which though it did greatly increase the grief of relations, God, who wisely orders all things for good to those he intends grace and mercy to, made this very restraint, and hard

usage a blessed advantage to their souls, as may appear by their own words, when after great importunity and charge, some of their near relations had leave to speak a few words to them before the keeper, to which they replied, they were contented with the will of God whatever it should be. Having been in Newgate three weeks, there was order given to carry them down into the west, in order to their trial; which being told them they answered, they were glad of it; and as they went out of Newgate several that beheld them, seeing them so cheerful, said, surely they had received their pardon, else they could never carry it with that courage and cheerfulness. Although this must be observed, that from first to last whatever hopes they received from friends, they still thought the contrary, never being much affected with the hopes of it, nor cast down, nor the least discouraged at the worst that man could do. In their journey to Dorchester, the keepers that went with them have given this account of them, _that their carriage was so grave, serious, and Christian, that made them admire to see and hear what they did from such young men._

_A near relation that went into the west to see the issue of things, and to perform whatsoever should be necessary for them, gives the following account--_At Salisbury, the 30th of August, I had the first opportunity of conversing with them. I found them in a very excellent composure of mind, declaring their experience of the grace and goodness of God to them in providing for them, turning the hearts of all in whose hands they had been both at Exon and on shipboard, to shew pity and to favour them; although since they came to Newgate they were hardly used, and now in their journey loaded with heavy irons and more inhumanly dealt with. They with great cheerfulness professed that they were better and in a more happy condition than ever in their lives, from the sense they had of the pardoning love of God in Jesus Christ to their souls, wholly referring themselves to their wise and gracious God to chuse for them life or death, expressing themselves thus: _Anything what pleaseth God, what he sees best, so be it. We know he is able to deliver; but if not, blessed be his name; death is not terrible now, but desirable._ Mr. Benjamin Hewling particularly added, _As for the world, there is nothing in it to make it worth while to live, except we may be serviceable to God therein._ He afterwards said, _Oh! God is a strong refuge: I have found him so indeed!_

_The next opportunity I had was at Dorchester, whither they were both carried, and remained together four days. By reason of their strait confinement, our conversation was much interrupted; but this appeared, that they had still the same presence and support from God, no way discouraged at the approach of their trial, nor at the event of it, whatever it should be.

_The sixth of September, Mr. Benjamin Hewling was ordered to Taunton to be tried there. Taking my leave of him, he said, Oh! blessed be God for afflictions. I would not have been without them for all this world.

_I remained still at Dorchester to wait the issue of Mr. William Hewling, to whom, after trial, I had free access, and whose discourse was much filled with admirings of the grace of God which had been manifested towards him in calling him out of his natural state. He said, God by his Holy Spirit did suddenly seize upon his heart when he thought not of it, in his retired abode in Holland, as it were secretly whispering in his heart, Seek ye my face, enabling him to answer his gracious call and to reflect upon his own soul, shewing him the evil of sin and the necessity of Christ, from that time carrying him on to a sensible adherence to Christ for justification and eternal life. Hence he found a spring of joy and sweetness beyond the comforts of the whole earth. He also said that he could not but admire the wonderful goodness of God in so preparing him for what he was bringing him to, which then he thought not of; giving him hope of eternal life before he called him to look death in the face, so that he did cheerfully resign his life to God before he came, having sought his guidance in it; and that both then and now, the cause did appear to him very glorious, notwithstanding all he had suffered in it, or what he farther might suffer; although for our sins, God hath withheld these good things from us. But he said, God carried on his blessed work on his own soul in and by all his sufferings; and whatever the will of God were, life or death, he knew it would be best for him.

_After he had received his sentence, when he returned to prison, he said, _Methinks I find my spiritual comforts encreasing ever since my sentence. There is no condemnation to them who are in Christ Jesus. It is God that justifieth, who shall condemn?

_When I came to him the next morning, when he had received news that he must die the next day, and in order to it was to be carried to Lyme that day, I found him in a more excellent, raised, and spiritual frame than before. He was satisfied, he said, that God had chosen best for him. He knows what the temptations of life might have been. I might have lived and forgotten God; but now I am going where I shall sin no more. Oh, it is a blessed thing to be freed from sin, and to be with Christ! Oh, how great were the sufferings of Christ for me, beyond all I can undergo! How great is that glory to which I am going; it will soon swallow up all our sufferings here!

_While he was at dinner, just before his going to Lyme, he dropped many abrupt expressions of his inward joy, such as these: Oh, the grace of God; the love of Christ! Oh, that blessed supper of the Lamb; to be for ever with the Lord! He farther said, When I went to Holland, you knew not what

snares, sins, and miseries I might have fallen into, nor whether we should ever meet again: but now you know whither I am going, and that we shall certainly have a joyful meeting. He said, pray give my particular recommendations to all my friends, with acknowledgments for all their kindness. I advise them all to make sure of an interest in Christ, for he is the only comfort when we come to die.

_One of the prisoners seemed to be troubled at the manner in which they were to die: to whom he replied, I bless God that I am reconciled to it all. Just as he was going to Lyme, he wrote these few lines to a friend, being hardly suffered to stay so long--I am going to launch into eternity, I hope and trust, into the arms of my blessed Redeemer; to whom I commit you, and all my dear relations. My duty to my dear mother, and love to all my sisters, and the rest of my friends.

William Hewling.

_As they passed through the town of Dorchester to Lyme, multitudes of people beheld them with great lamentations, admiring his deportment at his parting with his sister. Passing on the road, his discourse was exceedingly spiritual, taking occasion from every thing to speak of the glory they were going to. Looking at the country as he passed, he said, This is a glorious creation: but what then is the paradise of God to which we are going! It is but a few hours, and we shall be there, and be for ever with the Lord.

_At Lyme, just before they went to die, reading John 14:8, he said to one of his fellow sufferers, Here is a sweet promise for us: I will not leave you comfortless, I will come unto you. Christ will be with us to the last. One taking leave of him, he said, Farewell till we meet in heaven. Presently I shall be with Christ. Oh, I would not change condition with any one in this world! I would not stay behind for ten thousand worlds!

_To another who asked him how he did, he said, Very well, blessed be God. And farther asking him whether he could look death in the face with comfort now it approached so near, he said, Yes, I bless God I can with great comfort. God hath made this a good night to me: my comforts are much encreased since I left Dorchester. Then taking leave of him, he said, Farewell, I shall see you no more. To which he replied, How, see me no more? Yes, I hope to meet you in glory. To another who was by him to the last, he said, Pray remember my dear love to my brother and sister, and tell them I desire they would comfort themselves that I am gone to Jesus, and we shall quickly meet in Sion above.

_Afterwards he prayed for about three quarters of an hour with the greatest fervency, exceedingly blessing God for Jesus Christ, adoring the riches of

his grace in him, in all the glorious fruits of it towards him, praying for the peace of the church of God and of these nations in particular; all with such eminent assistance of the Spirit of God as convinced, astonished, and melted into pity the hearts of all present, even the most malicious adversaries, forcing tears and expressions from them; some saying they knew not what would become of them after death, but it was evident he was going to great happiness.

_When just departing out of the world, with a joyful countenance he said, _Oh, now my joy and comfort is that I have a Christ to go to; and so sweetly resigned his spirit to Christ, on the 12th of September, 1685.

_An officer who had shewn so malicious a spirit as to call the prisoners devils, when he was guarding them down, was now so convinced that he afterwards told a person of quality that he never was so affected as by his cheerful carriage and fervent prayer, such as he believed was never heard, especially from one so young; and said, I believe, had the lord chief justice been there, he would not have let him die.

_The sheriff having given his body to be buried, although it was brought from the place of execution without any notice given, yet very many of the town, to the number of two hundred, came to accompany him: and several young women of the best of the town laid him in his grave in Lyme church-yard, Sep. 13, 1685.

_After which his sister wrote this following letter to her mother:-- Although I have nothing to acquaint my dear mother withal, but what is most afflictive to sense, both as to the determination of God's will and as to my present apprehension concerning my brother Benjamin who still remains; yet there is such an abundant consolation mixed in both, that I only wanted an opportunity to pay this duty; God having wrought so glorious a work on both their souls, revealing Christ in them, that death is become their friend. My brother William having already with the greatest joy declared to those that were with him to the last, that he would not change conditions with any that were to remain in this world, and he desired that his relations would comfort themselves that he is gone to Christ. My brother Benjamin expects not long to continue in this world, and is quite willing to leave it when God shall call, being fully satisfied that God will chuse what is best for him and for us all. By these things God doth greatly support me, and I hope you also, my dear mother, which was and is my brother's great desire. There is still some room to pray for one; and God having so answered, though not in kind, we have encouragement still to wait on him.

Honoured mother,

Your dutiful daughter.

_When I came to Taunton to Mr. Benjamin Hewling, he had received the newes of his brother_s being gone to die with so much comfort and joy, and afterwards of the continued goodness of God in encreasing it to the end, expressed himself to this effect--We have no cause to fear death, if the presence of God be with us, there is no evil in it, the sting being taken away. It is nothing but our ignorance of the glory the saints pass into by death which makes it appear dark to ourselves or our relations: if in Christ, what is this world that we should desire an abode in it? It is all vain and unsatisfying, full of sin and misery.--He also intimated his own cheerful expectations soon to follow, discovering then and all along great seriousness and sense of spiritual and eternal things, complaining of nothing in his present circumstance but want of a place of retirement to converse more uninterruptedly with God and his own soul; saying that his lonely time in Newgate was the sweetest in his whole life. He said God had some time before struck his heart, when he thought of the hazard of his life, to some serious sense of his past life, and the great consequences of death and eternity, shewing him that they were the only happy persons that had secured their eternal state; the folly and madness of the ways of sin and his own thralldom therein, with his utter inability to deliver himself, also the necessity of Christ for salvation. He said it was not without terror and amazement for some time the sight of unpardoned sin with eternity before him. But God wonderfully opened to him the riches of free grace in Christ Jesus for poor sinners to flee to, enabling him to look alone to a crucified Christ for salvation. He said his blessed work was in some measure carried on upon his soul amidst all his business and hurries in the army, but never sprung forth so fully and sweetly till his close confinement in Newgate. There he saw Christ and all spiritual objects more clearly, and embraced them more strongly: there he experienced the blessedness of a reconciled state, the excellency of the ways of holiness, the delightfulness of communion with God, which remained with deep and apparent impressions on his own soul, which he frequently expressed with admiration of the grace of God towards him. Perhaps my friends, said he, may think this the saddest summer of my life; but, I bless God, it hath been the sweetest and happiest of it all; nay, there is nothing else that deserves the name of happiness. I have in vain sought satisfaction from the thing of this world, but I never found it. But now I have found rest for my soul in God alone.

_Oh how great is our blindness by nature; till God opens our eyes we can see no excellency in spiritual things, but spend our precious time in pursuing shadows, and are deaf to all the invitations of grace and glorious offers of the gospel. How just is God in depriving us of that we so much slighted and abused. Oh, his infinite patience and goodness, that after all he should sanctify any methods to bring a poor sinner to himself! Oh,

electing love, distinguishing grace! What great cause have I to admire and adore it!--What an amazing consideration is the suffering of Christ for sin to bring us to God! His suffering from wicked men was exceeding great: but alas, what was that to the colours of his soul under the infinite wrath of God! This mystery of grace and love is enough to swallow up our thoughts to all eternity.

_As to his own death he would often say, He saw no reason to expect any other. I know God is infinitely able to deliver, and am sure he will do it, if it be for his glory and my good. In which I bless God, I am fully satisfied. It is all my desire that he would choose for me, and then I am sure it will best, what ever it be. For truly unless God have some work for me to do in the world for his service and glory, I see nothing else to make life desirable. In the present state of affairs, there is nothing to cast our eyes upon but sin, sorrow, and misery; and were thing ever so agreeable to our desires, it is but the world still, which will never be a resting place. Heaven is the only state of rest and happiness: there we shall be perfectly free from sin and temptation, and enjoy God without interruption for ever.

_Speaking of the disappointment of their expectations in the work they had undertaken, he said with reference to the glory of God, the prosperity of the gospel, and the delivery of the people of God, we have great cause to lament it; but for that outward and prosperity which would have accompanied it, it is of small moment in itself. As it would not satisfy, so neither could it be abiding; for at longest, death would have put an end to it all. Also adding, nay, perhaps, we might have been so foolish as to be taken with part of it, to the neglect of our eternal concerns; and then I am sure our present circumstances are incomparably better.

_He frequently expressed great concern for the glory of God, and affection to his people, saying: If my death may advance God_s glory, and hasten the deliverance of his people, it is enough. Saying it was a great comfort to him to think of so great a privilege as that of having an interest in all their prayers. In his converse he particularly delighted in those persons in whom he saw most holiness shining: also great pity to the souls of others, saying that the remembrance of our former vanity may well cause compassion towards others in that state. In his converse he prompted them to seriousness, telling them that death and eternity were such weighty concerns that they deserved the utmost attention of our minds; for the way to receive death cheerfully is to prepare for it seriously; and if God should please to spare our lives, surely we have the same reason to be serious, and spend our remaining days in his fear and service. He also took great care that the worship of God which they were in a capacity of maintaining there, might be duly performed; as reading, praying, and singing of psalms, in which he evidently took great delight.

_For those three or four days before their deaths, when there was a general report that no more should die, he said, I do not know what God hath done contrary to our expectations: if he doth prolong my life, I am sure it is all his own, and by his grace I will wholly devote it to him. But on the 29th of September, about ten or eleven at night, we found the deceitfulness of this report, they being then told that they must die the next morning, which was very unexpected as to the suddenness of it. But herein God glorified his power, grace, and faithfulness, in giving suitable support and comfort by his blessed presence, which appeared upon my coming to him at that time and finding him greatly composed. He said, Though men design to surprise, God doth and will perform his word, to be a very present help in trouble.

_The next morning, when I saw him again, his cheerfulness and comfort were much encreased, waiting for the sheriff with the greatest sweetness and serenity of mind; saying, Now the will of God is determined, to whom I have referred it, and he hath chosen most certainly what is best. Afterwards, with a smiling countenance, he discoursed of the glory of heaven, remarking with much delight the third, fourth, and fifth verses of the twenty-second of the Revelations: And there shall be no more curse; but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it, and his servants shall serve him, and they shall see his face, and his name shall be in their foreheads; and there shall be no night there, and they shall need no candle, nor light of the sun; and they shall reign for ever and ever. Then he said, Oh, what a happy state is this! Shall we be loth to go and enjoy this? He then desired to be read to him 2 Cor. 5:1-11. For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens, &c. His hope and comfort still encreasing, with the assurance of an interest in that glorious inheritance to the possession of which he was now going, he said, death was more desirable than life, and he had rather die than live any longer here.--As to the manner of his death, he said, When I have considered others under these circumstances, I have thought it very dreadful; but now God hath called me to it, I bless him that I have quite other apprehensions of it. I can now cheerfully embrace it as an easy passage to glory; and though death separates from the enjoyment of each other here, it will be but for a very short time, and then we shall meet in such enjoyments as now we cannot conceive, and for ever rejoice in each other's happiness.--Then reading the scriptures and musing with himself, he intimated the great comfort which God conveyed to his soul in it; saying, Oh, what an invaluable treasure is this blessed word of God! In all conditions here is a store of strong consolation. One desiring his bible, he said, No: this shall be my companion to the last moment of my life. Thus praying together, reading, meditating, and conversing of heavenly things, they waited for the sheriff, who when he came, void of all pity or civility, hurried them away, scarcely suffering them to take leave of their friends.

Notwithstanding this, and the doleful mourning of all about them, the joyfulness of his countenance was encreased. Thus he left the prison, and thus he appeared in the sledge, where they sat about half an hour before the officers could force the horses to draw; at which they were greatly enraged, there being no visible obstruction from weight or way. At last the mayor and sheriff haled them forwards themselves, Balaam like, driving the horses.

_When they came to the place of execution, which was surrounded with spectators, many that waited their coming, said, that when they saw him and them come with such cheerfulness and joy, and evidence of the presence of God with them, it made death appear with another aspect.-- They first embraced each other with the greatest affection; then two of the elder persons praying audibly, they joined with great seriousness. Then he required leave of the sheriff to pray particularly; but he would not grant it, and only asked him, whether he would pray for the king. He answered, I pray for all men. He then requested that they might sing a hymn. The sheriff told him it must be with the rope about their necks; which they cheerfully accepted, and sung with such heavenly joy and sweetness that many who were present said, it both broke and rejoiced their hearts. Thus in the experience of the delightfulness of praising God on earth, he willingly closed his eyes on a vain world, to pass to that eternal enjoyment, on September 30, 1685.

_All present of all sorts were exceedingly affected and amazed. Some officers who had before insultingly said, Surely these persons have no thoughts of death, but will find themselves surprised by it, now acknowledged that they had something extraordinary within, which carried them through with so much joy. Others said that they were so convinced of their happiness that they would be glad to change conditions with them. The soldiers in general, and all others, lamented exceedingly, saying, It was so sad a thing to see them so cut off that they scarcely knew how to bear it. Some of the most malicious in the place, from whom nothing but railing was expected, said, as they were carried to their grave in Taunton church, These persons have left sufficient evidence that they were now glorified spirits in heaven. A great officer also in the king's army has often been heard to say; If you would learn to die, go to the young men of Taunton.--Much more was uttered by these good men, which showed the blessed frame of their hearts, to the glory of divine grace. But this is what occurs to memory. Mr. Benj. Hewling, about two hours before his death, wrote the following letter, which shewed his great composure of mind.

_Honoured Mother,

_That news which I know you have a great while feared, and we expected, I must now acquaint you with; that notwithstanding the hopes you gave in your two last letters, warrants are come down for my execution, and within these few hours I expect it to be performed. Blessed be the Almighty God, who gives comfort and support in such a day! How ought we to magnify his holy name for all his mercies, that when we were running on in a course of sin he should stop us in full career, and show us that Saviour whom we had pierced, and out of his free grace enabled us to look upon him with an eye of faith, believing him able to save to the utmost all such as come to him! Oh, admirable long suffering patience of God: that when we were dishonouring his name, he did not take that time to bring honour to himself by our destruction! But he delighteth not in the death of a sinner, but had rather he should turn to him and live: and he hath many ways of bringing his own to himself. Blessed be his holy name, he has taught my heart in some measure to be conformable to his will, which worketh patience, and patience experience, and experience hope, which maketh not ashamed. I bless God that I am not ashamed of the cause for which I lay down my life; and as I have engaged in it, and fought for it, so now I am going to seal it with my blood. The Lord will still carry on the same cause which hath been long on foot; and though we die in it and for it, I question not but in his own good time he will raise up other instruments more worthy to carry it on to the glory of his name, and the advancement of his church and people.

_Honoured mother, I know there has been nothing left undone by your or my friends for the saving of my life, for which I return many hearty acknowledgements to yourself and to them all; and it is my dying request to you and them, to pardon all undutifulness and unkindness in every relation. Pray give my duty to my grandfather and grandmother; service to my uncles and aunts; and my dear love to all my sisters; to every relation and friend a particular recommendation. Pray tell them all how precious an interest in Christ is when we come to die, and advise them never to rest in a Christless state. For if we are his, it is no matter what the world do to us: they can but kill the body, and blessed be God, for the soul is out of their reach. I question not but their malice wishes the damnation of that, as well as the destruction of the body, which has too evidently appeared by their deceitful flattering promises.

_I commit you all to the care and protection of God, who has promised to be a Father to the fatherless, and a husband to the widow, and to supply the want of every relation. The Lord God of heaven be your comfort under these sorrows, and your refuge from those miseries which we may easily foresee coming upon poor England, and the poor distressed people of God in it. The Lord carry you through this vale of tears with a resigning submissive spirit; and at last bring you to himself in glory; where I question not but you will meet your dying son,

Benjamin Hewling_

Mr. Kiffin adds to this statement, _Only for myself it was a great comfort to me, and is to observe what testimony they left behind of that blessed interest they had in the Lord Jesus, and their humble and holy confidence of their eternal happiness.

One thing I think it necessary to observe, that at the trial of William Hewling, the Lord Chief Justice Jefferies was pleased in public court, to tell him, that his grandfather did as well deserve that death, which he was like to suffer as they did. Which I mention to that end, that thereby it may be seen what an eye they had upon me for my ruin, if the Lord who hath watched over me for good, had not prevented.

The relation who attended them in the west, and from whom Mr. Kiffin received, his account, was their sister, Hannah Hewling, who, about a year afterwards, married Major Henry Cromwell, and who died in 1731. When all other means had failed, she determined to present a petition to the King. For this purpose she was introduced by Lord Churchill, afterwards Duke of Marlborough: while they waited in the antichamber for admittance, standing near the chimney-piece, Lord Churchill assured her of his most hearty wishes of success to her petition. _But, madam, (said he) I dare not flatter you with any such hopes, for that marble is as capable of feeling compassion as the king_s heart._ This declaration of Lord Churchill, adds no small credibility to Jefferies_ report of the king_s obdurate cruelty. [Memoirs of Cromwell, vol. ii, p. 162.]

Noble observes, _It has been said in most of the accounts which have been published, that lord chief justice Jefferies always treated Hannah Hewling according to his usual custom, with the greatest brutality; but this is not true: for Jefferies always treated her with the greatest politeness and respect. This instance however does not much soften the horror of his general character. Jefferies had a relation from whose fortune he had formed great expectations; and as this relation was an intimate acquaintance of the Hewlings, he exerted himself very warmly with him on their behalf. He repeatedly protested to the chief justice, _that the continuance of his friendship, together with every benefit he might hope to result from it, depended entirely on his using every endeavour to save the Hewlings. This Jefferies declared that he did; but he always declared that the king was inexorable.

_When Jefferies was afterwards a prisoner in the tower, he complained to Dr. Scott, author of The Christian Life, and who visited him under his confinement, of his hard fate. _I was hated (said he) by the kingdom for doing so much in the west, and I was ill received by the king for not having done more._ He used almost the same words when he was applied

to for the Hewlings. Burnet says, _the king took pleasure to relate the cruelties of Jefferies in the drawing-room to foreign ministers, and at his table called it Jefferies_ campaign._ At the return of this infamous wretch, he created him a baron and peer of England, as a reward for his faithful services.

_For many reasons it would be improper (adds Noble) to omit what Mr. Hewling Luson has said of these two young men. _The two unfortunate brothers, Benjamin and William Hewling, were the only males of their name, and of their family, which was in the highest esteem and popularity among the staunch whigs and dissenting protestants, at that time so numerous and respectable in the city. Their parts were excellent, and their education was the best that could be given them; their morals were spotless, their piety exemplary; their zeal against popery, the ardour of their courage in the field, and the manly meekness, and devout resignation of their deportment to the last, under their sufferings, concurred with their youth, the one twenty-one and the other not quite twenty, and the uncommon beauty and gracefulness of their persons, to place them the first in the list which was at that time called the Western martyrology, and to render the severity of their fate most pitied of any who fell a sacrifice to the popish vengeance of James, though there were some other sentences much more unjust._ [Memoirs of Cromwell, vol. ii, p. 469.]

We conclude this account with the sentiments of Mr. Benjamin Keach concerning them, who, from his intimate acquaintance with their grandfather, was well qualified to describe their characters. In his poem, entitled Distressed Zion relieved, dedicated to King William and Queen Mary, in 1689, he has this lamentation as the language of Zion.

_Now stop mine eyes, for fear your floods should fail,

And I want tears for all I must bewail:

But yet I need not doubt; springs I espy,

Yea fountains which will give a fresh supply

For two young plants, who both sprang from one stem.

Beloved of God, I hope, as well as men.

Dear Hewlings, of what we use might you have been,

If you to spare, the Almighty good had seen!

What cruel tyrants had we lately here,

That two such tender branches would not spare?
But when I think of grace that they had store,
And with what patience they their sufferings bore,
It gives such comfort, I can weep no more.
What testimony did they leave behind,
Of that sweet joy which they in Christ did find?
When wicked men all pity did deny,
Our Saviour in compassion_s moved thereby:
And doubtless they are pleased in that high sphere
Where the spirits of just men triumphant are._

The king apprehending that many of the rebels had got to London and were concealed there, was desirous of finding out the persons who harboured them, as he declared he would sooner pardon the rebels than these. One of the persons who suffered on this account was of the Baptist denomination. Bishop Burnet gives the following account of this matter. _There was in London (says he) one Gaunt, a woman that was an Anabaptist, who spent a great part of her life in acts of charity, visiting the jails, and looking after the poor of what persuasion soever they were. One of the rebels found her out, and she harboured him in her house, and was looking for an occasion of sending him out of the kingdom. He went about in the night, and came to hear what the king had said. So he by an unheard-of baseness went and delivered himself, and accused her that had harboured him. She was seized on, and tried. There was no witness to prove that she knew the person she harboured was a rebel, except he himself. Her maid witnessed only that he was entertained at her house: but though her crime was that of harbouring a traitor, and was proved only by this infamous witness, yet the judge charged the jury to bring her in guilty, pretending that the maid was a second witness, though she knew nothing of that which was the criminal part. She was condemned and burnt, as the law directs in the case of women convicted of treason. She died with a constancy, even to cheerfulness, that struck all who saw it. She said, charity was a part of her religion as well as faith: this at worst was feeding an enemy. So she hoped that she had reward with him for whose sake she did this service, how unworthy soever the person was who made so ill a return for it. She rejoiced that God had honoured her to be the first that

suffered by fire in this reign, and that her suffering was a martyrdom for that religion which was all love. Penn the quaker told me that he saw her die. She laid the straw about her for burning her speedily, and behaved herself in such a manner that all the spectators melted in tears._ [Burnet_s *History of his own Times*, vol. ii. p. 649.]

She was executed according to her sentence, at Tyburn, Oct. 23, 1685, and left the following paper written with her own hand, and delivered it to Captain Richardson, then keeper of Newgate.

_Not knowing whether I shall be suffered, or able, because of weaknesses that are upon me, through my hard and close imprisonment, to speak at the place of execution, I have written these few lines to signify that I am reconciled to the ways of my God towards me; though it is in ways I looked not for, and by terrible things, yet in righteousness; for having given me life, he ought to have the disposing of it when and where he pleases to call for it. And I desire to offer up my all to him, it being my reasonable service, and also the first terms which Christ offers, that he who will be his disciple must forsake all and follow him. Therefore let none think hard, or be discouraged at what hath happened unto me; for he doth nothing without cause in all that he hath done unto me; he being holy in all his ways, and righteous in all his works, and it is but my lot in common with poor desolate Zion at this day. Neither do I find in my heart the least regret for any thing I have done in the service of my Lord and Master, Jesus Christ, in securing and succoring any of his poor sufferers that have shewed favour, as I thought, to his righteous cause; which cause though it be now fallen and trampled on, yet it may revive, and God may plead it in at another time more than ever he hath yet done, with all its opposers and malicious haters. And therefore let all that love and fear him not omit the least duty that comes to hand or lies before them, knowing that now Christ hath need of them, and expects they should serve him. And I desire to bless his holy name that he hath made me useful in my generation, to the comfort and relief of many desolate ones; that the blessing of many who were ready to perish hath come upon me, and I have helped to make the widow_s heart leap for joy. And I bless his holy name that in all this, together with what I was charged with, I can approve my heart to him, that I have done his will, though it doth cross man_s. The scripture which satisfy me are these: Hide the outcasts; bewray not him that wandereth. Let mine outcasts dwell with thee: be thou a covert to them from the face of the spoiler--Thou shouldst not have delivered up those of his that did remain in the day of distress. Isa. 16:3,4; Obad. 12,13,14. But men say you must give them up, or die for it. Now whom to obey judge ye. So that I have cause to rejoice and be exceeding glad, in that I suffer for righteousness sake, and that I am counted worthy to suffer for well doing; and that God hath accepted any service from me, which

hath been done in sincerity, though mixed with manifold infirmities, which he hath been pleased for Christ_s sake to cover and forgive.

And now as concerning my crime, as it is now called; alas, it was but a little one, and such as might well become a prince to forgive. But he that shews no mercy shall find none; and I may say of it in the language of Jonathan, I did but taste a little honey, and lo, I must die for it! I did but relieve an unworthy, poor, distressed family, and lo, I must die for it. Well, I desire in the lamb-like nature of the gospel to forgive those that are concerned; and to say, Lord, lay it not to their charge! But I fear he will not; nay, I believe, when he comes to make inquisition for blood, it will be found at the door of the furious judge [Withers]; who because I could not remember things, through my dauntedness at Burton_s wife and daughters witness, and my ignorance, took advantage of it, and would not hear me when I had called to mind that which I am sure would have invalidated the evidence. And though he granted something of the same kind to another, he denied it to me. At that time my blood will also be found at the door of the unrighteous jury, who found me guilty upon the single oath of an outlawed man; for there was none but his oath about the money, who is no legal witness, though he be pardoned, his outlawry not being reversed, also the law requiring two witnesses in point of treason. As to my going with him to the place mentioned, namely, the Hope, it was by his own word before he could be outlawed, for it was about two months after his absconding. So that though he was in a proclamation, yet not high treason, as I am informed; so that I am clearly murdered. And also bloody Mr. Atterbury, who hath so insatiably hunted after my life, though it is no profit to him, yet through the ill will he bears me left no stone unturned, as I have ground to believe, till he brought it to this, and shewed favour to Burton, who ought to have died for his own fault, and not to have bought his own life with mine. Captain Richardson, who is cruel and severe to all under my circumstances, did at that time without any mercy or pity, hasten my sentence, and held up my hand that it might be given. All which, together with the great one of all [James II] by whose power all these and multitudes more of cruelties are done. I do heartily and freely forgive as against me; but as it is done in an implacable mind against the Lord Jesus Christ, and his righteous cause and followers, I leave it to Him who is the avenger of all such wrong, and who will trend upon princes as upon mortar, and be terrible to the kings of the earth.

_Know this also that though you are seemingly fixed, and because of the power in your hands are weighing out your violence, and dealing with a spiteful mind because of the old and new hatred, by impoverishing and every way distressing those you have got under you; yet unless you can secure Jesus Christ, and also his holy angels, you shall never do your business, nor shall your hand accomplish your enterprise. He will be upon

you ere you are aware; and therefore that you would be wise, instructed, and learn, is the desire of her that finds no mercy from you!

Elizabeth Gaunt._

_P.S. Such as it is, you have from the hand of her who hath done as she could, and is sorry she can do no better; hopes you will pity, and consider, and cover weaknesses and shortness, and any thing that is wanting; and begs that none may be weakened or stumble by my lowness of spirit, for God_s design is to humbløe and abase, that he also may be exalted in that day. And I hope he will appear in a needful time and hour, and it may be he will reserve the best wine till the last, as he hath done for some before me. None goeth a warfare at his own charges, and the spirit blows not only where and when it listeth; and it becomes me who have so often grieved it and quenched it, to wait for and upon his motions, and not to murmur; but I may mourn, because through the want of it I honour not my God nor his blessed cause, which I have so long loved and delighted to serve; and repent of nothing but that I have served it and him no better._

In a work entitled A display of Tyranny, there are some remarks upon the trial of this good woman which are highly creditable to her character.

Were my pen (says the author) qualified to represent the due character of this excellent woman, it would be readily granted that she stood most deservedly entitled to an eternal monument of honour in the hearts of all sincere lovers of the reformed religion. All true christians, though in some things differing in persuasion from her, found in her a universal charity and sincere friendship, as is well known to many here, and also to a multitude of the Scotch nation, ministers and others, who for conscience sake were thrust into exile from prelatic rage. These found in her a most refreshing refuge. She dedicated herself with unwearied industry to provide for their supply and support, and therein I do include to think she outstripped every individual, if not the whole body of protestants in this city. Hereby she became exposed to the implacable fury of the bloody papists, and those blind tools who co-operated to promote their accursed designs; and so there appeared little difficulty to procure a jury, as there were well prepared judges, to make her a sacrifice as a traitor to holy church. [Crosby, vol. iii. p. 135-193.]

Mrs. Gaunt was executed on the same day as Alderman Cornish, who on account of his having zealously opposed the exclusion bill in the late reign, was obnoxious to the court. Mr. Keach in the before-mentioned poem, takes notice of this event. Distressed Zion is introduced as saying,

_Who can forbear to weep, or who forbear to tell,

What to a pious woman than befell?

Poor Mistress Gaunt, most dear thou wast to me,

Few of thy sex ever excelled thee

In zeal, in knowledge, or in charity;

Who wast condemned a cruel death to die,

_Cause thou relievedst men in misery.

These two I must bewail, who in one day,

By Romish treachery were swept away._

The prosecution of the dissenters was still carried on with all imaginable severity, and great were the oppressions of those who frequented separate meetings both in London and the country. The justices and clergy were equally diligent in their several parishes. The spiritual courts were again opened. Injunctions were sent out by the bishops under the seal of their offices to all ministers in their dioceses strictly to enjoin and require all church-wardens to present those who came not to church, or that received not the sacrament the preceeding Easter. These were published on Lord_s-day, July 4, 1686, in Hertfordshire, within the diocese of Lincoln, and in Essex within that of London, and in several other places. _So terrible were these things (says Neal) that many families and ministers removed with their effects to New England._ The king took large strides towards asserting absolute power, in which he was supported by the judges, who all but one gave it as their opinion, _(1.) That the laws of England were the king_s laws--(2.) That it is an inseparable branch of the prerogative of the king_s of England, as of all other sovereign princes, to dispense with all penal laws on particular occasions--(3.) That of these reasons and cases the king is the sole judge--(4.) That this is not a trust now invested in and granted to the present king, but the ancient remains of the sovereign power of the kings of England, which was never yet taken from them nor can be._ Thus the laws of England were given up at once into the hands of the king by the voice of his judges.

_This point being secured, his majesty began to espouse the cause of the nonconformists. _All on a sudden (says Burnet) the churchmen were disgraced, and the dissenters in high favour. Lord chief justice Herbert, went the western circuit after Jefferies, and was now made lord chancellor, and all was grace and favour to them. Their former sufferings were much reflected upon and pitied; every thing was offered that might alleviate them; their ministers were encouraged to set up their conventicles, which had been discontinued or held very secretly for four or five years;

intimations were given every where that the king would not have them nor their meetings disturbed._

This mark of royal favour appears to have produced the effect designed on some of the dissenters. An address was presented from some of the Baptists in London to the king by the following ministers; namely, Messrs. Coxe, Collings, Jones, Plant, and Dennis, and signed by three others. It was said to contain these passages: _That they made their very thankful acknowledgements for his majesty_s gracious pardon to all his subjects; that they were deeply sensible thereof; that they would be very obedient subjects, and venture their lives and fortunes for his majesty._ This address was shewed to many of the courtiers by the king while the petitioners were on their knees, at which they were very merry. The king answered them by saying, _That if they carried themselves loyally, they should find protection._ From this it was credibly reported that the Baptists had an assurance that they might not only have a pardon for what was past, but a patent to give them impunity for keeping meetings or conventicles in their own way, behaving themselves peaceably. [M.S. penes me.]

To carry the king_s designs into effect, a Dispensation or License office was instituted, where all who applied might have indulgences on paying only fifty shillings for themselves and their families. Many who had been prosecuted for keeping conventicles took out those licences, which not only stopped all processes that were commenced, but gave them liberty to go publicly to meetings for the future.

A curious circumstance of this kind took place at Abingdon, where there were many Baptists who had been greatly persecuted and forced to shut up their meeting. The pastor at this time was Henry Forty, who will be noticed in another part of our work. We are not furnished with the names of the persons who were implicated in this affair, but seven of the Baptists had been indicted at the assizes; on the 23rd of Elizabeth, for not going to church, and others were presented in the spiritual courts for not receiving the sacrament at Easter. Their trial came on at the assizes in July 1686, before Mr. Justice Holloway and Mr. Justice Luwick. Their offences were greatly aggravated by the Recorder, Mr. Finmore, and their enemies were certain of convicting them. But the dissenters_ counsel, Mr. Medlecot, who had been lately turned out of the recordership of the town, and had formerly received many rebukes from the lord chancellor who probably had displaced him, brought them out of their difficulty. When he stood up on their behalf, the court said, _Are you detained by these people?_ Yes, said Mr. Medlecot. Judge Holloway being on the bench, the court answered, _We thought so;_ and looked very sourly upon him. Mr. Medlecot replied, _Your lordship has served them more effectually than I._ At this his lordship was much offended. _And they give you greater

thanks, _ added Mr. Medlecot; _for your lordship and my lords the judges have declared his majesty a sovereign prince; that the laws are his laws; that he might dispense with them when it was necessary; that he was judge of that necessity; and he has thought it necessary in the case of these defendants. _ He than produced a patent under the broad seal.

These people expecting no mercy from the court, had applied to an attorney and told him their case, and said they had heard that Mr. Brent had obtained dispensations for others, and hoped he would be ready to do the like for them. The attorney told them to get their case signed by two justices of the peace of the county; but as they knew none sufficiently friendly, he got it done for them by two justices who knew nothing about them. The attorney being acquainted with Mr. Brent, sent it up to London to him, and he procured the dispensation from his majesty, who was pleased to grant them his pardon for crimes past, and a patent under his broad seal. This was commanded to be produced and shewed to the clerk of the assizes, and to be recorded by the clerk of the peace and the surrogates of the spiritual courts. All further prosecutions founded on any penal statutes in ecclesiastical matters were immediately to cease.

The dispensation being produced in court, most of those who were present were filled with consternation; their colour changed, and they hung down their heads with grief. The defendants were discharged by public proclamation in the court, and set at liberty on Saturday, July 10, 1686. The very same evening they prepared and cleaned their old meeting-house; and the next day, both in the morning and afternoon, many hundreds assembled very quietly and without any disturbance. The patent, which extended to these twenty-five persons and their whole families, cost about twenty-six pounds.

The state of things was now very peculiar; the hierarchists severely persecuting the dissenters, and the king granting dispensations under his broad seal. Thus cross winds sometimes raise waves which break the force of each other, and thereby the vessel is preserved.

The patent granted on this occasion being curious, and as we do not recollect seeing any copy of it published, it is subjoined for the gratification of the reader.

_We whose names are hereunto subscribed do certify that A.B.C. to the best of our knowledge have demeaned and behaved themselves peaceably and quietly towards his late majesty King Charles II., and his present majesty King James II., and their governments.

_Given under our hands and seals this day of July 1686, by two justices of the peace in the county of Berks.

_Granted thereupon.

_J.R. Whereas our most dear brother the late king deceased had signified his intentions to his attorney-general for the pardoning such of his subjects who had been sufferers in the late times of usurpation and rebellion for their loyalty, and whose parents and nearest relations had then been sufferers for the same cause, or who had themselves testified their loyalty and affection to the government; and were presented, indicted, and convicted for not taking or refusing to take the oath of allegiance or supremacy, or one of them; or had been prosecuted upon the prerogative writ called the long writ of the exchequer for the penalty of twenty pounds per mensem, or upon outlawries or writs de. excom. cap., or other processes for the causes aforesaid; or for not coming to church or receiving the sacrament of the Lord_s supper according to the usage of the church of England, or by reason of their convictions of recusancy or exercise of their religion, or who were otherwise prosecuted as recusants, or imprisoned for any of the crimes aforesaid; and for the doing thereof our said brother in divers counties had given orders. Now in pursuance of these gracious intentions of our said most dear brother, and for that the persons hereunto annexed have produced unto us, certificates of their services and sufferings of themselves, their parents, and nearest relations; our will and pleasure therefore is that the persons mentioned in the said schedule, their wives, families and servants shall not in any sort be prosecuted and molested for any of the causes above mentioned. Wherefore we recommend and direct you and every one of you in your respective places to forbear all prosecution against the said persons, their wives, families, and servants, and every of them; and that you cause all processes and proceedings whatsoever so commenced and issued, or to be commenced or issued against the said persons, their wives, families, servants, and every of them, for the causes aforesaid, to be wholly superseded, discharged, or stayed; and they and every one of them absolutely discharged and set at liberty until our royal will and pleasure be further known or signified unto you respectively. And for doing these, and for the entry and enrolment thereof with you respectively, shall be unto you and every of you respectively a sufficient warrant.

_Given at our court at Windsor, the 7th of July, in the second year of our reign, 1686.

SUNDERLAND.

By his Majesty_s command._

_To all archbishops and bishops, their chancellors and commissaries; and to all archdeacons and their officials, and all others exercising any ecclesiastical jurisdiction; and to our judges and justices of assize, of gaol

delivery, justices of the peace, sheriffs, mayors, bailiffs, and all other persons whom it may in any wise concern._ [M.S. penes me.]

In 1687, the king was resolved to humble the church of England, because many of that community were not willing to go all the lengths he wished, though they had constantly professed the doctrines of nonresistance and passive obedience. For this purpose he began to flatter the dissenters with promises of his favour, and endeavoured by his agents to persuade them to accept the kindness of the king, and to concur with him in his designs.

Though the dissenters had been so much oppressed, yet they were a powerful and respectable class of the people; and notwithstanding so many of them had left the country, they were still very numerous. Burnet says, _The dissenters at this time were divided into four main bodies; the Presbyterians, the Independents, the Anabaptists, and the Quakers. The former had not the visible distinction of different rites; and the dispute about the constitution and subordination of churches, which had broken them when power was in their hands, was now forgotten in their depressed condition; so that they were looked upon as one body, and were above three parts in four of all the dissenters. The main difference between these was, that the Presbyterians seemed reconcilable to the church; for they loved episcopal ordination and a liturgy, and upon some amendments seemed disposed to come into the church; and they liked civil government, and limited monarchy. But as the Independants were for a commonwealth in the state, so they put all the power of the church in the people, and thought that their choice was an ordination, nor did they approve of set forms of worship. Both were enemies to the high form of prerogative which the king was assuming, and were very averse to popery. They generally were of a mind as to accepting the king_s favour, but were not inclined to take the papists into a full toleration; much less could they be prevailed on to concur in taking off the tests. The Anabaptists were generally men of virtue and of universal charity; and as they were far from being on any treating terms with the church of England, so nothing but a universal toleration could make them capable of favour or employment. The Quakers had set up such a visible distinction in the matter of the hat, and saying thou and thee, that they had all as it were a badge fixed upon them, so that they were easily known. Among these, Penn had the greatest credit, as he had free access at court. To all these it was proposed that the king intended to settle the minds of the different parties in the nation, and to enrich it by enacting a perpetual law that should be passed with such solemnities as had accompanied the Magna Charta; so that not only penal laws should be for ever repealed, but that public employments should be opened to men of all persuasions, without any oaths limiting them to one sort or party of men. There were many meetings among the leading men of the several sects._ [Burnet_s History, vol. ii. p. 702.]

In April 1687, the king published a declaration of toleration, and indulgence of liberty of conscience to all persons dissenting from the church of England. _His majesty now made the cruelty of the church (says Burnet) the common subject of discourse. He reproached them for setting on foot so often a violent persecution of the dissenters. He said, he had intended to have set on this toleration sooner, but that he was restrained by some of them who had treated with him; and had undertaken to show favour to those of his religion, provided they might be still suffered much in his honour: for as the persons denied the whole thing, so the freedom of discourse in any such treaty ought not to have been made use of to defame them._ [Ibid. vol. ii. p. 715.]

Upon this (adds the bishop) a new set of addresses went round to the dissenters; and they who had so long reproached the church of England as too courtly in their submissions and flatteries, seemed now to vie with them in these abject strains. Few however concurred in these addresses, and the persons who brought them up were mean and inconsiderable; yet the court was lifted up with it. The king and his priests were deluged with these addresses out of measure: they seemed to think that they had gained the nation, and had now conquered those who were hitherto their most irreconcilable enemies.

Some of the Baptists in London were delighted with this declaration of indulgence, and caught greedily at the bait without discerning the hook. It must however be acknowledged that liberty of conscience upon any terms could not fail to be grateful to persons who had been so long and so cruelly oppressed. The address they presented to the king contains some strong expressions: they say, _It is the sense of this invaluable favour and benefit derived to us from your royal clemency that compels us once more to prostrate ourselves at your majesty_s feet with the tender of our most humble thanks for peace and liberty. Such demonstrations as these of your majesty_s tender care of the prosperity and quiet of your peaceable subjects will absolutely command the hearts of them all._

This address was presented on Thursday, March 23, 1687, by Mr. Cox, and four or five more of that society, through the Earl of Sunderland.

From this statement it appears that the body of the Baptists were implicated in the address, nor even all of that denomination in London, as might have been concluded from the account given of it by Neal; who, on mentioning this circumstance, speaks of _the London Anabaptists in general._ This mistake was neither common to them as a body, nor peculiar to them as Baptists, for some of all the denominations manifested the same folly of tacitly acknowledging a power in the king which he did not possess, and which tended to encourage a system of government that

might afterwards have been employed to their destruction, if circumstances had not prevented.

The dissenting ministers in general, though they did not join in these addresses to the king, yet seem to have gladly availed themselves to the king, yet seem to have gladly availed themselves of this indulgence, and to have made use of the liberty it afforded them of worshipping God. _The Baptists,_ it is said in a manuscript before me, _have returned to their great meeting places, and taken others as large as they can procure._ How many great meeting places they had at this time is not known; but that in Devonshire Square, which is now occupied by the congregation of Mr. Timothy Thomas, had been opened the year before. In the same M.S. it is said, _Tuesday, March 1, 1686, Mr. Kiffin opened his meeting place; and he and others preached at it, and psalms were sung there. At this time also the Baptists in the city in general had procured licences, and kept public and numerous meetings._

As a considerable degree of odium has attached to those who fell in with the dispensing power which the king assumed, it seems desirable that this matter should be set in a fair point of view. That the Baptists in London were divided in opinion on this matter we have asserted and are happy to have it in our power to prove it. In the M.S. of Mr. William Kiffin we find the following statement. After having concluded the account of his grandsons, he adds, _This great storm being over it did in a great measure effect that which was intended by them; for although now there appeared no difficulty in the way, but popery might be set up, and that there would be little or no stop to that design, means were used with the members of the house of commons to promise upon the sitting in parliament, to take off the Parliament Tests, which was the only hindrance to Roman catholics being chosen parliament men. They did generally refuse the making any such promise, and the insolency of the papists in their meetings, which now began to be more and more public, did so much alarm both the ministers of the church of England and also all true Protestants in general, that the interest of popery rather abated, and dissatisfactions grew.

_Therefore a new project was set on foot to engage the Protestant Dissenters, by giving them the liberty of their meetings, and promising them equal authority in the nation with other men; but this was in the tail of it to engage them thereby to promote the taking off the Test, and to strengthen the papist interest by setting the Protestant Dissenters against the Protestants of the church of England. This plot being carried on with all diligence, took with several dissenters, but indeed they were but few, and for the generality, of the meaner sort, William Penn being indeed the head of that party. I thought it my duty (adds Mr. Kiffin) to do all I could to prevent those dissenters of my acquaintance from having any hand

therein. But from the sense they had of their former sufferings, and the hopes of finding all things as was promised, I could not prevail._

We are at a loss to account for Mr. Kiffin_s declaration that the persons who presented this address were of the meaner sort; when it is recollected that Dr. Coxe, Mr. William Collins, Mr. Thomas Plant, Mr. Benjamin Dennis, and others, who were among them, were certainly persons of great respectability. It is probable however that they were but few, compared with those who objected to the measure. From their established reputation, however, we must give them full credit for the purity of their intentions: no doubt but they thought that the parliament would confirm the king_s declaration. However this was, it is certainly proper they should be heard in their own defence. In a work entitled, The mischief of persecution, published in 1688, by Mr. Plant and Mr. Dennis, they say, _Since his gracious majesty, by the goodness of God, had published his royal declaration, for liberty of conscience, and upon such grounds and reasons as we conceive are unanswerable, outdoing all kings and princes, not only in the fact of his clemency, but in the reason of it: and as it is that which will be to his immortal honour, so we hope, that it will have that perfection by law, that may for ever deliver this nation from the convulsions and evils it has laboured under in former years, and render us so happy, as not any more so much as to dispute, whether persecution be agreeable to the divine law.

_We confess we most willingly fall in with his majesty_s gracious designs, and shall to our utmost endeavour carry them on, not knowing a greater service we can be capable of rendering to God, to our prince, our country, our religion; we certainly believe, that if once we were on even grounds with our fellow subjects, it will be easy to let them see the goodness and benefit of liberty of conscience, and how just it is, that religion should be left to him who is the object of it, to correct the errors of men about it, and we have not only the authority of scriptures and right reason, but also the suffrage of his gracious majesty to the assertion.

We conclude, humbly, imploring the divine person and councils of the king, by whom we sit under our vine and fig-tree, and pray he may live to see the top stone of this glorious fabric of liberty of conscience laid, and that he and his people may long live to enjoy the blessings of it, and that piety to God, and that charity to men, which we believe are natural fruits of this liberty, may flourish in this kingdom.

The work from whence this is an extract, was published a few months before the glorious revolution; and bears on the title page the imprimatur of, we suppose, the king_s licenser of the press, as follows:--[May 7, 1688. This may be printed. C.N.] Happily for the nation the prayers and designs of these good men to promote liberty of conscience were

answered in a way which they little expected. The king lived to see the top stone of this glorious fabric laid, or at least to hear of it, when he was reduced to such circumstances, that he had no power to prevent it, nor to destroy it.

In August this year, the king resolved to change the magistracy in most of the cities. He began with London. He not only changed the court of aldermen, but the government of most of the companies of the city. Amongst the new aldermen we find the name of Mr. Kiffin, who is called in the list, _Captain Kiffin,_ probably from his having been a captain of a merchant ship in his younger years. There is an interesting and affecting story related in reference to this affair, in Noble_s history of Cromwell, which is as follows.

_Kiffin was personally known both to Charles and James; and when the latter of these princes, after having arbitrarily deprived the city of the old charters, determined to put many of the dissenters into the magistracy; under the rose he sent for Kiffin to attend him at court. When he went thither in obedience to the king_s commandment, he found many lords and gentlemen. The king immediately came up to him, and addressed him with all the little grace he was master of. He talked of his favour to the dissenters in the court style of this season, and concluded with telling Kiffin that he had put him down as an alderman in his new charter. _Sire,_ replied Kiffin, _I am a very old man, and have withdrawn myself from all kind of business for some years past, and am incapable of doing any service in such an affair to your majesty in the city. Besides, Sire--the old man went on, fixing his eyes stedfastly on the king, while the tears ran down his cheeks--_the death of my grandsons gave a wound to my heart which is still bleeding, and never will close but in the grave._

_The king was deeply struck by the manner, the freedom, and the spirit of this unexpected rebuke. A total silence ensued, while the galled countenance of James seemed to shrink from the horrid remembrance. In a minute or two, however, he recovered himself enough to say, _Mr. Kiffin, I shall find a balsam for that sore,_ and he immediately turned about to a lord in waiting_ [*Memoirs of Cromwell*, vol. ii. p. 463.]

Mr. Kiffin, from the humility which he appears to have constantly manifested, takes no notice of his waiting on the king, but the manner in which he relates this affair deserves a place in our work. _In a little time after (says Mr. Kiffin) a great temptation attended me, which was a commission from the king, to be one of the aldermen of the city of London; which as soon as I heard of it, I used all the means I could to be excused, both by some lords near the king, and also by Sir Nicholas Butler, and Mr. Penn, but all in vain. I was told that they knew I had an interest that would serve the king, and although they knew that my

sufferings had been very great, in cutting off my two grand children, and loosing their estates, yet it should be made up to me both in their estates, and also in what honour and advantage I could reasonably desire for myself.

_But I thank the Lord those proffers were no snare to me. Being fully possessed in my judgment that the design was the total ruin of the protestant religion, which I hope I can say, was and is dearer to me than my life, I remained without accepting the office from the time I received the summons to take it, above six weeks, until the lord mayor, Sir John Peake, in court said, I ought to be sent to Newgate, and in a few days after, I understood it was intended to put me into the crown office, and to proceed with all severity against me. Which, when I heard, I went to the ablest council for advice, (one that is now a chief judge in the nation) and stating my case to him, he told me my danger was every way great, for if I accepted to be an alderman, I ran the hazard of five hundred pounds, and if I did not accept, as the judges then were, I might be fined by them ten, or twenty, or thirty thousand pounds, even what they pleased. So that I thought it better for me to run the lesser hazard of 500 pounds which was certain, than be exposed to such fines as might be the ruin of myself and family. Yet did I forbear taking the place of alderman for some time, when the aldermen then sitting agreed to invite the king to dinner on the lord mayor_s day, and laid down fifty pounds each alderman to defray the charge; which made some of them the more earnest for my holding, and they were pleased to tell me I did forbear to excuse my fifty pounds! But to prevent any such charge against me, I desired a friend to acquaint my lord mayor and the court, that I should deposit my 50 pounds with them; yet delaying accepting the office, which I accordingly sent them. When the lord mayor_s day came, and the dinner prepared for the king, I the next day understood, that there were invited to the feast the Pope_s Nuncio, and several other priests that dined with them, which had I known they had been invited I should hardly have parted with my 50 pounds towards that feast; but the next court day I came to the court, and took upon me the office of alderman. In the commission I was also a justice of the peace and one of the lieutenancy; but I never meddled with either of those places, neither in any act of power in that court, touching causes between man and man, but only such things as concerned the welfare of the city, and good of the orphans, whose distressed condition called for help, although we were able to do little towards it. We had frequently orders from the king to send to the several companies to put out great numbers of livery men out of the privilege of being livery men, and others to be put in their rooms; most of which that were so turned out were protestants of the church of England. There has been a list of 700 at a time to be discharged although no crime laid to their charge; that all men might see to what a deplorable state this city was like to be in, had not the Lord by an eminent hand of providence prevented; for hearing of the preparations making by the

Prince of Orange, the several charters to the companies were again restored to their former liberties._

From these hints of Mr. Kiffin respecting the favour shown to dissenters, and the opposition made to the Episcopalians, it is very evident that had they been so disposed, they had it in their power to have distressed the church party._And it may be (says Neal) they could have turned the scale against them, if they had given way to revenge, and fallen in heartily with the king_s measure. They were strongly tempted on all sides. The king preferred them to places of profit and trust, and gave them all manner of countenance and encouragement, while the churchmen loaded them with promises of what great things they would do for them as soon as it was in their power. But alas, no sooner was the danger over than the majority of them forgot their vows in distress._

The next year was a memorable one for England, and especially to the protestant dissenters, who were by the events which occurred, delivered from all the misery and oppression they had so long endured. On November the 5th, the Prince of Orange landed at Torbay; and in a very little time the body of the nation discovered their inclination so evidently, that the king lost both head and heart at once. The city of London was in confusion. Reports were spread that the Irish would cut all the throats of the protestants all over the nation in one and the same night, which awakened the fears of the people, and put them al night upon their guard. When this fright was over, the mob rose and pulled down the popish mass-houses, and burned the materials in the streets. Father Petre, with the priests and Jesuits who had swarmed about the court, disappeared, and retired into foreign parts, and several of the king_s arbitrary ministers absconded. Jefferies was taken at Wapping in a sailor_s habit, and would have been torn in pieces by the mob, if he had not been conducted by a strong guard to the tower, where he died before he came to his trial. Soon after, the tyrant James being left almost alone, departed the kingdom, and fled to France. The throne was declared abdicated; and on February 13, 1688-9, William and Mary were proclaimed king and queen of England, to the joy of the nation.

One of the first measures of government was to pass the Act of Toleration, the Magna Charta of the Protestant Dissenters, by which they were relieved from all pains and penalties for separating from the church of England. Thus a stable foundation was laid for the preservation of their liberties, and an effectual restraint imposed upon their enemies, who wished to destroy their privileges.

Liberty being thus afforded to all denominations of dissenters, the Baptists seem to have taken immediate steps to improve their privileges by enquiring into the state of the churches, and to have adopted means to

promote their prosperity. To convene a general meeting of the Particular Baptist churches, a circular letter was sent, signed by some of the London ministers. The following is a copy of that sent to the church of Luppitt, in Devonshire, the place where the present church at Upottery then met.

London, July 22, 1689.

_To the Church of Christ in Luppitt kind Salutations.

_We the elders and ministering brethren of the churches in and about London, being several times assembled together to consider of the present state of the baptized congregations, not only in this city, but also in the country, cannot but first of al, adore the divine wisdom and goodness of Almighty God, in respect of his late most gracious providence, for our deliverance from that dismal dispensation, which threatened us from the continual and unwearied attempts and designs of the enemy of our sacred religion and civil liberties; by which means our sinking and drooping spirits are again revived, and our earnest hopes and long expectations raised, and afresh quickened, in respect of the more full and perfect deliverance, for the accomplishing of those gracious promises and prophecies contained in the holy scripture relating to the latter days.

_But, in the second place, we cannot but bewail the present condition our churches seem to be in; fearing that much of that former strength, life, and vigour, which attended us is much gone; and in many places the interest of our Lord Jesus Christ seems to be much neglected which is in our hands, and the congregations to languish, and our beauty to fade away (which thing, we have some ground to judge, you cannot but be sensible of as well as we); and from hence we have been put upon most mature and serious considerations of such things that may be the cause thereof, and amongst others are come to this result: that the great neglect of the present ministry Is one thing, together with that general unconcernedness there generally seems to be, of giving fit and proper encouragement for the raising up an able and honourable ministry for the time to come; with many other things which, we hope, we are not left wholly in the dark about, which we find we are not in a capacity to prevent and cure (as instruments in the hand of God, and his blessing attending our christian endeavours) unless we can obtain a general meeting here in London of two principal brethren (of every church of the same faith with us) in every county respectively. We do therefore humbly intreat and beseech you, that you would be pleased to appoint two of your brethren_one of the ministry, and one principal brother of your congregation with him_as your messengers; and send them up to meet with the rest of the elders and brethren of the churches in London, on the 3rd of September next; and then we hope we shall have that before us, and be also helped to consider such things that may much tend to the honour of God, and further the

peace, well-being, establishment at present, as also the future comfort of the churches. We hope you will readily, notwithstanding the change, comply with our pious and christian desire herein; and in the mean time, to signify your intentions forthwith in a letter; which we would have you direct to our reverend and well beloved brethren, Mr. H. Knowles, or Mr. W. Kiffin. This is all at present from us, your brethren and labourers in God_s vineyard, who greet you well in our Lord Jesus Christ, and subscriber ourselves your servants in the gospel.

_William Kiffin, Hansard Knollys, John Harris, George Barrett, Benjamin Keach, Edward Man, Richard Adams.

_Brother Kiffin lives in White_s alley, Little Moorfields._ [Baptist Register for 1695, p. 260.]

This letter was attended with considerable effect. The ministers, or messengers, of more than a hundred churches assembled at the time proposed. The meetings, which were continued for eight or nine days, were peculiarly solemn and interesting; and the business transacted was of real importance to the welfare and prosperity of the churches. The greatest order and unanimity was preserved, as they all appear to have been animated and governed by the apostolic injunction, _Let us therefore follow after the things that make for peace; and the things wherewith one may edify another._

The transactions of this Assembly are related by themselves in a pamphlet entitled, The Narrative of the Proceedings of the General Assembly of Divers Pastors, Messengers, and ministering Brethren, of the Baptized Churches, met together in London, from September 3-12, 1689, from divers parts of England and Wales; owning the doctrine of personal election and final perseverance; sent from, and concerned for, more than one hundred congregations of the same faith with themselves.

The General Epistle to the Churches, unto the church of God, meeting in --
--- send greetings.

Beloved in our Lord Jesus Christ!

It doth not a little affect our souls, to see how ready you were to comply with that Christian and pious invitation you had, to send one or two worthy brethren, as your messengers, to meet with the rest of us in this great assembly; for which we return you our hearty thanks: hoping, that not only we, and the churches of the saints to whom we are related, at this present time will have cause to bless, praise, and magnify the Father of mercies, and God of all comfort and consolation upon this account; but that the ages to come may have some grounds to rejoice and praise his

holy name, through a divine blessing upon our consultations. Our endeavours in this assembly were chiefly to consider of the present state and condition of all the congregations respectively under our care and charge; and what might be the causes of the spiritual decay, and loss of strength, beauty and glory, in our churches: and to see (if we might be helped by the Lord herein) what might be done to attain to a better and more prosperous state and condition.

And now, brethren, in the first place, with no little joy we declare unto you how good and gracious the Lord has been to us, in uniting our hearts together in the spirit of love, and sweet concord in our debates, consultations, and resolves, which are sent unto you; there being scarcely one brother who dissented from the assembly in the sentiments of his mind, in any one thing we have proposed to your serious considerations, either in respect of the cause of our witherings, or what we have fixed on as a means of recovery to a better state, if the Lord will.

And therefore, in the second place, be it known unto you, that we all see great cause to rejoice and bless God, that after so dismal an hour of sorrow and persecution, in which the enemy doubtless designed to break our churches to pieces, and not only us, but to make the whole Sion of God desolate, even so as she might become as a plowed field; the Lord was pleased to give such strength and power in the time of need, to bear up your souls in your testimony for Jesus Christ, that your spirits did not faint under your burdens in the time of your adversity; so that we hope we may say, in the words of the church of old, Though all this is come upon us, yet we have not forgotten thee, neither have we dealt falsely in thy covenant. Our heart is not turned back, neither have our steps declined from thy way. Though thou hast sore broken us in the place of dragons, and covered us with the shadow of death, Psalm 34:17,18,19. Yet nevertheless we fear Christ may say, I have somewhat against you, because you have left your first love, as he once charged the church of Ephesus, and may possibly most churches in England; it is therefore good to consider from whence we are fallen, and repent and do our first works, Rev. 2:5.

We are persuaded one chief cause of our decay is want of holy zeal for God, and the house of our God; few amongst us living up, we fear, to what they profess of God, nor answering the terms of that sacred covenant they have made with him; the power of godliness being greatly decayed, and but little more than the form thereof remaining amongst us. The thoughts of which are enough to melt our spirits, and break our hearts to pieces, considering those most amazing providences of the ever blessed God under which we have been, and more especially now are exercised, and the many signal and most endearing obligations he is pleased to lay us under. The spirit of this world, we clearly discern, has got too, too much into the hearts of most Christians and members of our churches, all

seeking their own, and none, or very few, the things of Jesus Christ; if, therefore, in this there be no reformation, the whole interest of the blessed Lord Jesus will still sink in our hands, and our churches will be left to languish, whilst the hands of poor ministers become as weak as water, and sorrow and grief seize upon the spirits.

Thirdly, We cannot but bewail that great evil, and neglect of duty in many churches concerning the ministry.

1. In that some, though they have brethren competently qualified for the office of pastors and deacons, yet omit that sacred ordinance of ordination, whereby they are rendered incapable of preaching and administering the ordinances of the gospel so regularly, and with that authority which otherwise they might do. Those who have failed herein, we desire would, in the fear of God, lay it to heart and reform.

2. In neglecting to make [due] gospel provision for their maintenance, according to their abilities; by which means many of them are so incumbered with worldly affairs, that they are not able to perform the duties of their holy calling, in preaching the gospel, and watching over their respective flocks.

Fourthly, We find cause to mourn, that the Lord's day is not more religiously and carefully observed, both in a constant attendance on the word of God in that church to which members do belong, and when the public worship is over, by a waiting on the Lord in family duties, and private devotion.

But because we have sent unto you the whole result of this great assembly particularly, we shall forbear to enlarge further upon these causes of our withering and decays.

One thing you will find we have had before us, and come to a resolve about, which we are persuaded will prove on exceeding great blessing and advantage to the interest of Jesus Christ in our hands; and if the Lord enlarge all our hearts, give a revival to the sinking spirits of the mourners in Sion, and to languishing churches too, which is that of a general or public stock or fund of money to be raised forthwith. First, by a free-will offering to the Lord: and secondly, by a subscription, every one declaring what he is willing to give, weekly, monthly, or quarterly to it.

And now, brethren, we must say, the Lord is about to try you in another way, than ever you have been tried to this day, because till now no such thing was settled amongst us, and so not propounded to you. It will be known now, whether you do love Jesus Christ, and his blessed interest, gospel and church, or no; whether you love him more than son or

daughter. Oh that you would at this time shew your zeal for God, and let all men see the world is not so in your hearts, but that Jesus Christ hath much room there: 'Tis to be given towards God's holy temple, to build up his spiritual house, which hath a long time lain as waste. Remember how willingly the Lord's people offered upon this account formerly; 'tis some great as well as good thing the Lord, and we his poor and unworthy servants and ministers, do expect from you. God has wrought a great work for us; Oh let us make some suitable return of duty to him, and act like a people called, loved, and saved by him. Shall so much be spent needlessly on your own ceiled houses, on costly attire and dresses, and delicious diet, when God's house lies almost waste? We are therefore become humble supplicants for our dear Master, and could entreat you on our bended knees, with tears in our eyes, to pity Sion, if it might but move your heart to Christians bounty and zeal for her and the Lord of Hosts. We fear God did let in the enemy upon us, to consume us, and waste our substance, because to this day we have withheld it from him, when his cause, gospel, and churches, called for more than ever yet you parted with; and that a blast has been upon our trades and estates, for our remissness in this matter. May we not say, Ye looked for much, and lo, it came to little; and when ye brought it home the Lord did bow upon it! Why, because, said God, of mine house that is waste, and ye run every one to his own house. Hag. 1:9. But if now we reform our doings, and shew our zeal for Christ and his gospel, and love to him, and act as becomes a willing people professing his name, you will see you will be no losers by it; For I will, saith the Lord, open the widows of heaven, and pour out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it. Mal. 3:10. If the worth of souls, the honour of God, the good of the church, the glorious promulgation of the gospel in the nation, the credit of your profession, your own peace, and the weight of eternal glory be upon your spirits, we doubt not but you will give evidence of it at this time; and so shall you build the old waste places, and raise up the foundation of many generations, and be the repairers of the breaches, and restorers of paths to dwell in. Isaiah 58:12.

WE, to these great and good ends, have thought upon and appointed a solemn day to fast and mourn before the Lord, and to humble ourselves, and seek his face, that a blessing may attend all that we have done, and you with us may yet further do for his holy name's sake.

A general Fast appointed in all the Congregations on the 10th of October next, 1689, with all the causes and reasons thereof:

The main and principal evils to be bewailed and mourned over before the Lord on that day, are as follows:

First, Those many grievous backslidings, sins, and provocations, not only of the whole nation, but also of the Lord_s own people, as considered in our public and private stations; particularly that great decay of first love, faith and zeal for the ways and worship of God; which hath been apparent, not only in our churches, but also in private families.

Secondly, That this declension and backsliding hath been, we fear, for a long series of time, and many sore judgments God has brought upon the nation; and a strange death of late come upon the Lord_s faithful witnesses, besides divers painful labourers in Christ's vineyard called home, and but few raised up in their stead; little success in the ministry; storms of persecution having been raised upon us, a new war commenced by the beast, (through the divine permission of God, and hand of his justice,) to a total overcoming, to appearance, the witnesses of Christ in these isles; besides his more immediate strokes by plague and fire, &c. God blasting all essays used for deliverance, so that we were almost without hope; therefore, our sins that provoked the righteous and just God to bring all these evils upon us, we ought to bewail and moan for before him. But withal not to forget his infinite goodness, who, when he saw that our power was gone, and that there was none shut up or left, that he should thus appear for our help and deliverance, in a way unexpected and unthought of by us.

Thirdly, The things we should therefore in the next place pray and cry to the Lord for, are, that he would give us true, broken, and penitent hearts, for all our iniquities, and the sins of his people, and wash and cleanse away those great pollutions with which we have been defiled; and also pour forth more of his Spirit upon us, and open the mysteries of his word, that we may understand whereabouts we are, in respect of the latter time, and what he is doing, and know our work, and that a blessing may attend all the churches of his saints in these nations, and that greater light may break forth, and the glory of the Lord rise upon us, and that the word may not any more be as a miscarrying womb and dry breasts, but that in every place multitudes may be turned to the Lord, and that love and sweet concord may be found among all the Lord_s people in these nations, that the great work begun therein so unexpectedly, may go on and be perfected to the praise of his own glory.

Likewise to put up earnest cries and supplications to the Lord for the lineal seed of Abraham, the poor Jews, that they may be called, and both Jews and Gentiles be made one sheepfold, under the one shepherd Jesus Christ.

These are some of the things we have thought good to lay before you, and which we hope we shall be helped with you to spread before the Lord on that day, with whatsoever else you or we may be helped to consider of; hoping you will not forget your pastors and ministers in your prayers, and

what we have been enabled to come to a resolve about, so that all may be succeeded with a glorious blessing from the Almighty; that the present churches, and those saints who shall come after us, may have cause to praise his holy name:

Which is the unfeigned prayer and desire of us, who subscribe ourselves your servants for Jesus_ sake.

Hansard Knollys, William Kiffin, Andrew Gifford, Robert Steed, Thomas Vauxe, William Collings, John Tomkins, Toby Willes, George Barrette, Benjamin Keach, Daniel Finch, John Carter, Samuel Ruttall, Isaac Lamb, Christopher Price, Robert Keate, Richard Tidmarsh, James Webb, John Harris, Thomas Winnell, James Hitt, Hercules Collins, Richard Sutton, Robert Knight, Leonard Harrison, Edward Price, William Phips, William Facey, John Ball, William Hankins, Samuel Ewer, Paul Fruin,

In the name and behalf of the whole assembly.

Memorand. _Tis agreed to by us, that the next general assembly be held at London, on that day which is called Whitsum-Monday, 1690.

The Narrative of the Proceedings, &c.

Whereas we the Pastors and Elders of the several churches in and about London, did meet together, and seriously take into our consideration the particular states of the baptized churches among ourselves; and after a long persecution, finding the churches generally under great decays in the power of godliness, and defects of gifts for the ministry; also, fearing that the same decays and defects might be among the churches of the same faith and profession throughout England and Wales, many of their ministers being deceased, many have ended their days in prison, many scattered by persecution to other parts, far distant from the churches to which they did belong: from a due sense of these things did, by a letter dated July 23, 1689, write to all the aforesaid churches throughout England and Wales, to send their messengers to a general meeting at London, the third of the seventh month, 1689. And being met together, the first day was spent in humbling ourselves before the Lord, and to seek of him a right way, to direct into the best means and method to repair our breaches, and to recover ourselves into our former order, beauty, and glory. In prosecution thereof, upon the fourth day of the same month, we, the Elders, ministering Brethren, and Messengers of the churches in and about London; and Elders, ministering Brethren, and Messengers of the several churches from several parts of England and Wales, hereafter mentioned; being again come together, after first solemnly seeking the Lord by prayer, did conclude upon these following preliminaries, and lay them down as the foundation of this our assembly, and rules for our

proceedings; wherein all the messengers of the churches aforesaid, in city and country, as well for the satisfaction of every particular church, as also to prevent all mistakes, misapprehensions and inconveniencies that might arise in time to come concerning this general assembly, do solemnly and unanimously profess and declare:

1. That we disclaim all manner of superiority and superintendency over the churches, and that we have no authority or power to prescribe or impose any thing upon the faith or practice of any of the churches of Christ. Our whole intendment is to be helpers together of one another, by way of counsel and advice, in the right understanding of that perfect rule which our Lord Jesus, the Bishop of our souls, hath already prescribed, and given to his churches in his word, and therefore do severally and jointly agree.
2. That in those things wherein one church differs from another church in their principles or practices, in point of communion, that we cannot, shall not impose upon any particular church therein, but leave every church to their own liberty to walk together as they have received from the Lord.
3. That if any particular offence doth arise betwixt one church and another, or betwixt one particular person and another, no offence shall be admitted to be debated among us, till the rule Christ hath given, in this matter, be first answered, and the consent of both parties had, or sufficiently endeavoured.
4. That whatever is determined by us in any case, shall not be finding on any one church, till the consent of that church be first had, and they conclude the same among themselves.
5. That all things we offer by way of counsel and advice, be proved out of the word of God, and the scriptures annexed.
6. That the breviates of this meeting be transcribed, and sent to every particular church with a letter.
7. That the messengers that come to this meeting, be recommended by a letter from the church to which they belong, and that none be admitted to speak in this assembly, unless by general consent.

The letters from several churches being read, the meeting was dismissed till next day, and concluded in prayer.

September 5, 1689.

After solemn seeking the Lord, all the Elders, ministering Brethren, and Messengers aforesaid, considered, debated, and concluded, that a public fund or stock was necessary, and came to a resolve in these three questions: 1. How to raise it? 2. To what uses it should be disposed of? 3. How to secure it?

Q. 1. How or by what means this public fund or stock should be raised?
Resolved,

1. That it should be raised by a free-will offering. That every person should communicate, for the uses hereafter mentioned, according to his ability, and as the Lord shall make him willing and enlarge his heart; and that the churches severally among themselves do order the collection of it with all convenient speed, that the ends proposed may be put into present practice.

2. That for the constant carrying it on, there be an annual collection made in the several churches, of a half-penny, penny, two pence, three-pence, four-pence, six-pence per week, more or less, as every person shall be willing; and that every congregation do agree among themselves to collect it, either weekly, monthly, or quarterly, according to their own convenience; and that ministers be desired to shew a good example herein. Exod. 35:4,5; 1 Chron. 29:14; Mal. 3:10; Hag. 1:9; 2 Cor. 8:11,12.

3. That every particular church do appoint their deacons, or any other faithful brethren, to collect, and to acquaint the church with the sum collected, and remit it quarterly into the hands of such persons as are hereafter nominated and appointed to receive it at London; the first quarterly payment to be made on the 5th of December next.

4. That the persons appointed to receive all the aforesaid collections, be our honoured and well-beloved brethren, whose names we have sent you in a printed paper by itself, all living in and about London; and when any of these aforesaid brethren die, then the major part of the survivors of them shall nominate and appoint another brother in his stead, to be confirmed or referred at the next general meeting of this assembly. And that the said nine brethren shall disburse it from time to time for the uses hereafter mentioned, according to the satisfaction they, or the major part of them, shall have from the information and testimony of any two churches in this assembly, or from the testimony of any particular association of churches in the country, or from the satisfaction they shall have by any other means whatsoever.

Q. 2. To what uses this fund or public stock shall be disposed of?
Resolved,

1. To communicate thereof to those churches that are not able to maintain their own ministry, and that their ministers may be encouraged wholly to devote themselves to the great work of preaching the gospel.
2. To send ministers that are ordained, or at least solemnly called to preach, both in city and country, where the gospel hath, or hath not yet been preached, and to visit the churches: and these to be chosen out of the churches in London, or in the country; which ministers are to be approved of, and sent forth by two churches at the least, but more of it may be.
3. To assist those members that shall be found in any of the aforesaid churches that are disposed for study, have an inviting gift, and are sound in fundamentals, in attaining to the knowledge and understanding of the languages, Latin, Greek, and Hebrew. These members to be represented to the nine brethren in London, by any two of the churches that belong to this assembly.

Resolved, the money collected be returned, as is expressed in a printed paper before mentioned, to one of the nine brethren mentioned in the said paper.

Resolved and concluded, that every quarter of a year an account shall be taken by those nine brethren in London, nominated in the printed paper aforesaid, of all the receipts and disbursements belonging to this aforesaid fund or stock: and an account signed by them, or the major part of them shall be transmitted to one church in every county, and from that church be communicated to all the rest of the churches aforesaid within the same county with all convenient speed. The first account to be made, and sent the 5th of January next.

Resolved, that what charges soever the said nine brethren are at in the service of this assembly, shall be discharged out of the aforesaid stock.

The questions proposed from the several churches, debated, and resolved.

Q. Whether it is not the duty of every church of Christ to maintain such ministers as are set apart by them, by allowing them a comfortable maintenance according to their ability?

A. Concluded in the affirmative, 1 Cor. 9:9-14; Gal. 6:6.

Q. Whether every church ought not to endeavour not only to provide themselves with an able ministry for the preaching of the word, but also to set apart to office, and in a solemn manner ordain such as are duly qualified for the same?

A. Concluded in the affirmative. Acts 14:23; Titus 1:5.

Q. Whether baptized believers are not at liberty to hear any sober and pious men of the Independent and Presbyterian persuasions, when they have no opportunity to attend upon the preaching of the word in their own assembly, or have no other to preach unto them?

A. Concluded in the affirmative, Acts 18:24,25,26.

Q. Whether the continuing of gifted brethren many years upon trial for eldership, or any person for the office of a deacon, without ordaining them, although qualified for the same, be not an omission of an ordinance of God?

A. Concluded in the affirmative.

Q. What is the duty of church members when they are disposed to marry, with respect to their choice?

A. To observe the apostle's rule, to marry only in the Lord, 1 Cor. 7:39.

Q. Whether when the church have agreed upon the keeping of one day, weekly, or monthly, besides the first day of the week to worship God, and perform the necessary services of the church, they may not charge such persons with evil that neglect such meetings, and lay them under reproof, unless such members can shew good cause for such their absence?

A. Concluded in the affirmative, Heb. 10:23.

Q. What is to be done with those persons that will not communicate to the necessary expences of the church whereof they are members, according to their ability?

A. Resolved, that upon clear proof, the persons so offending, as aforesaid, should be duly admonished; and if no reformation appears, the church ought to withdraw from them, Eph. 5:3; Matt. 25:42; 1 John 3:17.

Q. What is to be done with those persons that withdraw themselves from the fellowship of that particular church whereof they are members, and join themselves to the communion of the national church?

A. To use all due means to reclaim them by instruction and admonition; and if not thereby reclaimed, to reject them. Matt. 18:17; Luke 9:62; Heb. 10:38; Jude 19.

Resolved, that the like method to be taken with those that wholly forsake the fellowship of that congregation to which they have solemnly given up themselves.

Q. Whether believers were not actually reconciled to God, actually justified, and adopted, when Christ died?

A. That the reconciliation, justification, and adoption of believers, are infallibly secured by the gracious purpose of God, and merit of Jesus Christ. Yet none can be said to be actually reconciled, justified, or adopted, until they are really implanted into Jesus Christ by faith; and so by virtue of this their union with him, have these fundamental benefits actually conveyed unto them. And this, we conceive, is fully evidenced, because the scripture attributes all these benefits to faith as the instrumental cause of them, Rom. 3:25; 5:1,11; Gal. 3:26. And gives such representation of the state of the elect before faith, as is altogether inconsistent with an actual right in them. Eph. 2:1,2,3,12.

Q. Whether it be not necessary for the Elders, ministering Brethren, and Messengers of the churches to take into their serious consideration those excesses that are found among their members, men and women, with respect to their apparel?

A. In the affirmative_That it is a shame for men to wear long hair, or long periwigs, and especially ministers, 1 Cor. 11:14, or strange apparel, Zeph. 1:8. That the Lord reproves the daughters of Zion, for the bravery, haughtiness, and pride of their attire, walking with stretched out necks, wanton eyes, mincing as they go, Isaiah 3:16. As if they affected tallness, as one observes upon their stretched-out necks; though some in these times seem, by their high dresses, to out-do them in that respect. The apostle Paul exhorts, in 1 Timothy 2:9,10, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with broidered hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array; but with good works, as becometh women professing godliness. And 1 Peter 3:3,4,5. Whose adorning let it not be the outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel; but the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is, in the sight of God, of great price; for after this (fashion, or) manner, in old time, the holy women who trusted in God adorned themselves. And therefore, we cannot but bewail it with much sorrow and grief of spirit, that those brethren and sisters, who have solemnly professed to deny themselves, Matt. 16:24, and who are by profession obliged in duty not to conform to this world, Rom. 12:2, should so much conform to the fashions of this world, and not reform themselves in those inclinations that their natures addicted them to in days of ignorance, 1 Pet. 1:14. From these considerations, we earnestly desire that men and women whose souls are committed to our charge, may be watched over in this

matter, and that care be taken, and all just and due means used, for a reformation herein; and that such who are guilty of this sin of pride, that abounds in the churches as well as in the nation, may be reproved; especially considering what time and treasure is foolishly wasted in adorning the body, which would be better spent in a careful endeavour to adorn the soul; and the charge laid out upon those superfluities, to relieve the necessities of the poor saints, and to promote the interest of Jesus Christ. And though we deny not but in some cases ornaments may be allowed, yet whatever ornaments in men or women are inconsistent with modesty, gravity, sobriety, and prove a scandal to religion, opening the mouths of the ungodly, ought to be cast off, being truly no ornaments to believers, but rather a defilement; and that those ministers and churches who do not endeavour after a reformation herein, are justly to be blamed.

Q. Whether it be not the duty of all Christians, and churches of Christ, religiously to observe the Lord's day, or first day of the week, in the worship and service of God, both in public and private?

A. It is concluded in the affirmative:--Because we find that day was set apart for the solemn worship of God, by our Lord Jesus, and his holy apostles, through the infallible inspiration of the Holy Spirit.

1st. Because it appears that the Son of God, who was manifested in the flesh, had authority to make a change of the solemn day of worship, being Lord of the Sabbath. Matt. 12:8.

2dly. It is manifested that our blessed Lord and Saviour arose on that day, as having completed and confirmed the work of our redemption, Matt. 28:1; Luke 24:1; John 20:1, whereby he laid the foundation of the observation of that day.

3dly. Our Lord Jesus did then, on that day most plainly and solemnly appear to his disciples, teaching and instructing them, blessing them, and giving them their commission, breathing on them the Holy Ghost. Luke 24:13,27,36; John 20:19-23. Moreover on the next first day of the week, he appeared to them again, giving them a further infallible proof of his glorious resurrection: and then convinced the apostle Thomas, who was absent the first day before, but was now with them, John 20:26. Whereby it appears he sanctified and confirmed the religious observation of that day by his own example.

4thly. Our Lord and Saviour remained with his disciples forty days after his resurrection, speaking to them of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God, Acts 1:3. And we question not but he then gave command about the observation of this day.

5thly. For a further confirmation hereof, it appears that after his ascension, when his disciples or apostles, were assembled together solemnly with one accord, on the day of Pentecost, which by all computation, was the first day of the week: recorded, Acts 2:1,2. _He then poured out his Holy Spirit in a marvelous and an abundant measure upon them.

6thly. Accordingly, afterwards, we find this day was solemnly observed by the churches, as appears, Acts 20:7. Where we have the churches assembling on that day plainly asserted, with the solemn duties then performed, which were preaching and breaking of bread; and all this recorded as their usual custom which could be from no other cause but divine and apostolic institution. And it is most remarkable, and worthy the most serious observation of all the Lord_s people, that although the holy apostles, and others that were preachers of the gospel, took their opportunities to preach the word on the Jewish sabbath-day, and on other days of the week as they had convenient seasons afforded; yet we have no example of the churches then assembling together to celebrate all the ordinances of our Lord Jesus peculiar to them, but on the first day of the week; which manifest practice of theirs is evidently as plain a demonstration of its being a day set apart for religious worship, by the will and command of our Lord Jesus, as if it had been expressed in the plainest words. Forasmuch as they did nothing in those purest primitive times in the sacred worship of God, either as to time or form, but by a divine warrant from the holy apostles, who were instructed by our Lord Jesus, and were guided in all those affairs by his faithful and infallible Holy Spirit.

7thly. In like manner the solemn ordinance of collection for the necessities of the poor saints, was commanded to be performed on that day, 1 Cor. 16:1,2, by an apostolic ordination; which without question, by reason of their observing that day for their holy assembling and worship, was then required.

Lastly. It is asserted by all the considerate and able expositors of the holy scriptures, that the denomination or title of Lord_s day, mentioned Rev. 1:10, was attributed to the first day of the week, as the usual distinguishing name given to that solemn day by the Christians, or churches, in the primitive times; and as being a day to be spent wholly in the service and worship of the Lord, and not in our own worldly and secular affairs, which are lawful to be attended unto on other days of the week.

From all which, laid together and considered, we are convinced that it is our duty religiously to observe that holy day in the celebration of the worship of God.

Q. Whether the graces and gifts of the Holy Spirit be not sufficient to the making and continuing of an honourable ministry in the churches?

A. Resolved in the affirmative, Eph. 4:8,9; 1 Cor. 12:7.

Q. Whether it be not advantageous for our brethren now in the ministry, or that may be in the ministry, to attain to a competent knowledge of the Hebrew, Greek, and Latin tongues, that they may be the better capable of defending the truth against opposers?

A. Resolved in the affirmative.

Q. Whether an elder of one church may administer the ordinance in other churches of the same faith?

A. That an elder of one church may administer the ordinance of the Lord's supper to another of the same faith, being called so to do by the said church; though not as their pastor, but as a minister, necessity only being considered in this case.

We the Ministers and Messengers of, and concerned for, upwards of one hundred baptized congregations in England and Wales, denying Arminianism, being met together in London from the third of the seventh month to the eleventh of the same, 1689, to consider of some things that might be for the glory of God, and the good of these congregations; have thought meet, for the satisfaction of all other Christians that differ from us in the point of Baptism, to recommend to their perusal the confession of our faith, which we own, as containing the doctrine of our faith and practice; and do desire that the members of our churches respectively do furnish themselves therewith.

Moreover, this assembly do declare their approbation of a certain little book, lately recommended by divers elders dwelling in and about the city of London, entitled, The Ministers Maintenance vindicated. And it is their request, that the said treatise be dispersed among all our respective congregations; and it is desired that some brethren of each church take care to dispose of the same accordingly.

The elders and messengers of the assembly, in consequence of illiberal aspersions cast upon their connections, concluded the narrative of 1689, declaring their abhorrence of the late king's absolute and dispensing power, as well as their united and most hearty determination to venture their all for the protestant religion, and the liberties of their native country. And we do, say they, with great thankfulness to God, acknowledge his special goodness to these nations, in raising up our present king William, to be a blessed instrument in his hand, to deliver us

from popery and arbitrary power; and shall always, as in duty bound, pray that the Lord may continue him and his royal consort long to be a blessing to these kingdoms; and shall always be ready to the utmost of our ability, in our places, to join our hearts and hands, with the rest of our protestant brethren, for the preservation of the protestant religion, and the liberties of the nation.

William Kiffin, Hansard Knollys, Andrew Gifford, Robert Steed, Thomas Nauxe, John Tomkins, Toby Wells, George Barrette, Benjamin Keach, Samuel Buttall, Isaac Lamb, Christopher Price, Robert Keate, Richard Tidmarsh, James Webb, ohn Harris, Thomas Winnell, James Hitt, Edward Price, William Phips, William Facey, Joan Ball, William Hankins, Paul Fruin.

The persons appointed to receive all the collections made in the respective congregations for the general fund or public stock, are our honoured and well-beloved brethren, Mr. William Kiffin, Mr. Robert Bristow, Mr. Morice King, Mr. John Leader, sen. Mr. Isaac Marlow, Mr. John Skinner, Mr. Richard Hallowell, Mr. John Collet, and Mr. Edward Harrison.

Resolved, That the money be remitted from the country, to our beloved brother Mr. Edward Harrison, (one of the nine brethren before mentioned,) living at the sign of the Hen and Chickens, in Cheapside, London; with another letter signifying the same, to our beloved brother Mr. Morice King, living at the sign of the Mermaid in Lawrence Lane, Silkman, another of the nine brethren aforesaid.

We, whose names are subscribed, testify, that the persons aforementioned were unanimously chosen by the whole Assembly, September 12, 1689.

Hansard Knollys, Robert Steed, William Collins, Andrew Gifford, Thomas Vauxe, John Harris, Benjamin Keach, George Barrette, Samuel Buttall, Christopher Price, William Pritchard, William Hankins, Edmond White, Daniel Finch, John Tomkins, Edward Mann, James Webb, Thomas Winnell, Richard Adams, William Phips, John Ball, Richard Ring, Charles Archer, James Hitt, Hercules Collins, Leonard Harrison, Edward Price, William Facey, Paul Fruin, Richard Sutton, Robert Keate, John Carter, Robert Knight.

To preserve all the conciseness which is possible, we print the list which was published in 1692, with that for this year. The reader is desired to remark that those churches distinguished by an asterisk are Welsh Churches.

An Account of the several Baptized Churches in England and Wales, owning the Doctrine of Personal Election and Final Perseverance, that sent

either their Ministers or Messengers, or otherwise communicated their state in our General Assembly at London, on the 3d and 4th, and so on to the 11th day of the 7th month, called September, 1689.

There follow eight pages listing the churches and messengers at the meeting in September 1689 and March 1692. The churches are Berkshire, Bedfordshire, Buckinghamshire, Cambridgeshire, Cardiganshire, Cornwall, Devonshire, Dorsetshire, Durham, Essex, Gloucestershire, Glamorganshire, Hertfordshire, Hampshire, Herefordshire, Kent, Lancashire, Leicestershire, Middlesex, Monmouthshire, Norfolk, Northumberland, Oxfordshire, Pembrokeshire, Somersetshire, Suffolk, Surrey, Warwickshire, Wiltshire, and Worcestershire. [See the book for the names of the messengers.]

Hearty thanks are returned to you for your great love and charity towards our poor brother, Richard Dorwood, upon the account of his loss by fire._

The next meeting was held at the time appointed, viz. from June 9th to the 16th 1690, and a general epistle was addressed to the churches. This account we have not seen, nor have we been able to procure it. Part of the address was published in the Baptist Register some years since, but for some reason which is not mentioned, it was left unfinished.

There was also a meeting in the next year 1691, and the account of their proceedings was published under the title of A Narrative of the general assembly of the elders and messengers of the Baptized churches, sent from divers parts of England and Wales, which began in London June 2, and ended on the 8th of the same month, 1691, Owning the doctrines of personal election and final perseverance. The following is their general epistle to the churches.

_Dearly beloved Brethren,

The God of all grace hath brought us into a near and spiritual relation to you, and you have such a rooted interest in our hearts, that through grace we shall always be ready to lay out ourselves to the utmost of our capacity to promote the eternal well-being and happiness of your souls. Our sighs, groans, and prayers in secret, and our labours in public in all the holy administrations of the house of God, are sincerely directed to that end. God is our witness, who hath called us out to their service, in pursuance of his own glory, and his gracious design towards you. And whereas you have freely chosen us as your messengers, and entrusted us with power to consider, discourse about, and conclude upon those things proposed to us, in order to the general good of those churches to which we respectively belong, we have addressed ourselves to this work with earnest supplication to the Father of lights for his special assistance and direction

therein: and we are not without some good assurance that he bowed his ear to us, in regard of that harmony and good agreement which was observable in most of our debates and conclusions. And though we can impose nothing upon you, yet hereby is derived a greater authority than what was concluded, and it deserves to be so much the more regarded by you. We do heartily wish that you would look back to those things which you were formerly pressed and exhorted to in the two last assemblies of your messengers, for the promoting of the glory of God and your own good: and although we have not found the full end of our endeavours in all things answered, yet we bless God in many things we have, which gives us encouragement to hope that we may have some success in this; and we unfeignedly desire the thorough reformation, the happy settlement, and the firm peace and well-being of all those Christian churches we are immediately concerned with.

_One thing formerly pressed upon you was a liberal contribution by a free-will offering, and quarterly subscriptions or collections, towards raising a public stock for ends and uses fully known to you. And we return you our hearty thanks for what you have already done, and doubt not but thereby fruit will abound to your account in the day of Christ; and we hope you will not grow weary in well-doing, having the promise of God that you shall then reap. Many things might be urged to quicken you in this good work whereby several labourers in the Lord_s vineyard have been already relieved, several pious and hopeful young men have been assisted in their acquirement of learning, and some have been sent forth to visit the churches, to give their helping hand in order to their settlement according to the rule of the gospel. But we hope that this disposal of your money according to your intention may render motives of that kind unnecessary. However, that we may not be wanting in a matter of this nature, wherein the honour of God, the keeping up his public worship in the world, the edification of churches, and the conversion of the residue of God_s chosen is so much concerned, we shall humbly take the boldness to press you to a further progress therein; and the rather because several of our fellow-christians, who after us fall into this method, have far exceeded us. And why should not the glory of Christ and the advancement of his kingdom be as dear to us as to them? We hope it is, and therefore will not despair of prevailing with you.

_If any churches or members, on a review of what is past, shall be sensible of their own defect, we desire it may be made up, lest others should be discouraged, and the work in a little time cease. Things of this nature never prosper well without a free and cheerful concurrence of all conjointly concerned therein according to their ability; and should we find such a concurrence generally, it would be matter of great rejoicing to us, and be esteemed as a remarkable effect of the spirit of love which is diffused throughout all the members of Christ_s mystical body.

To further such a concurrence, let us consider(1.) From whom we have received all that we enjoy, and what promises of future supplies we have through grace an interest in_(2.) That we are but stewards of what we have, and that God can by his secret and just providence soon take away our stewardship, if we are not found faithful therein_(3.) That the end of what we have is the honour of God. Prov. 3:9_(4.) That the keeping up God_s public worship, which is inclusive of all the ends proposed by this public stock, is a principal way of honouring God; and all other ways of expending what we have are inferior to this_(5.) That giving in this way will be a great evidence of the sincerity of our profession, and will be a great conform in the latter end._Other things of this nature might be added; but we hope that God_s grace will carry you beyond all that our arguments can amount to, as was of old exemplified in the churches of Macedonia. 2 Cor. 8:1,2.

_In the next place, we would desire you who live in the country to send up your particular messengers to this general meeting, that we may have the more abundant evidence of your approbation of that good work intended and carried on therein; and let not the incident charges you are thereby exposed to be a discouragement to you, we being persuaded that our friends in the city, who are not liable to such charges, will make a compensation by a more liberal contributing to the public work.

_To conclude: dear brethren, we commend you to God and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up and to give you an inheritance among all them who are sanctified; amongst whom we desire to be found, who subscribe ourselves your brethren in the faith and the fellowship of the gospel,

Hansard Knollys, Robert Steed, William Collins, Andrew Gifford, Thomas Vauxe, Thomas Winnell, Richard Adams, William Phips, John Ball, Richard Ring, Samuel Buttall, Gerge Barrette, John Ward, Nathaniel Crabb, Thomas Winnell, Thomas Harrison, John Butt. June 8, 1691

It appears that at this time the churches in the different parts of England and Wales had been formed into distinct associations. Of these we have the following account.

The association of the churches in London, Middlesex, Kent, and Essex _ Theobalds, George Yard, Devonshire Square, Moorfields, Joiners Hall, Houndsditch, Virginia street, Wapping, Limehouse, Horsley-down, Winchester House, Mile-end, Richmond, Turnham-green, Mayes-pond, Sundwich, Hatfield-heath.

The association of the churches in Somerset, Dorset, Wilts, Gloucestershire, and Bristol _ Taunton, Bridgewater, Croscob,

Hallatrow, Hay Combe, Hatch, Kilmington, Dunster, Perriton-evil, Frome, Sarum, Warminster, Sedghill, Westbury, Devizes, Calne, Melksham, Bradford, Southwick, Malmesbury, Ninfield, Sudbury, Broadmead, Fryers.

The association of the churches in Abingdon, &c. _ Abindon, Wantage, Longworth, Oxford, Farringdon, Finstock, Maizey Hampton, Cirencester, Reading.

The association of the churches in Norfolk, Suffolk, &c. _ Norwich, Pulham, Sudbury, Wisbeach, Debach, Colchester.

The western association of churches _ Plymouth, Loose, Southams, Bovey, South Molton, Tiverton, Exon, Luppit, Dalwood, Lyme, Chard.

The association of the churches in Newcastle, Yorkshire, Northumberland, and Cumberland _ Newcastle, Bichbarn, Pontefract, Broughton, Egremont, Woolverstone.

Hampshire association _ Christchurch, Ringwood, Whitchurch, Southampton.

The association of the churches in Hertfordshire, Buckinghamshire, and Bedfordshire _ Kensworth, Eversholt, Perton, Hempstead, Sutley, Harlow, Tring.

The association of the churches in Stepton and Haddensham _ Stepton, alias Steventon, and Haddenham.

The association of the churches in South Wales, Monmouthshire, and part of Herefordshire _ Abergavenny, Blaen-y-wern, Creig-yr-alt.

Carmarthenshire association _ Ynys-vach, Rushacre, Lanydwr.

The association of the churches in Worcestershire, Warwickshire, Oxfordshire, Leicestershire, and part of Herefordshire _ Broomsgrove, Warwick, Dimock, Hereford, Tewkesbury, Moreton in the Marsh, Hook Norton, Alcester, Kilby.

The business attended to appears to have related principally to the establishment of a general fund, for the assistance of poor churches, and for the encouragement of young men to apply themselves to the work of the ministry. To carry this into effect they say, _We the said Elders and Messengers of the churches of Jesus Christ assembled together, having it under our consideration how much the name of God, the honour of the gospel, and the good of all the churches to which we belong are concerned

in our perseverance in these good things resolved upon in our former general assemblies, do agree and resolve unanimously, for the better increase and continuance of the fund, to propound it to you and exhort all our churches and members, with all our Christian friends and well-wishers thereto, to a liberal and cheerful contribution as God hath blessed them in the good things of this life._

_1. By bringing in their free-will offerings with all readiness of mind, as a sacrifice with which God is well pleased_2. By the continuance of their quarterly subscriptions, according as God shall bless them_3. By a liberal contribution quarterly, which we unanimously agree to promote in all our churches and assemblies, to this end that all whom God hath blessed with ability and a ready mind may have opportunity to shew their good will for promoting those great and good things for which this fund is raised; viz. the support of such ministers as the churches are not able to supply with what is necessary to their comfortable subsistence, so that they may be encouraged to take the better care of their own charge, and to preach the gospel where a door is open; and also godly young men, members of the churches whom God hath gifted, and are approved of, may be instructed in the knowledge of the tongues in which the holy scriptures were written.

_And we judge it not reasonable that they who contribute nothing to the fund should desire any thing out of it. Therefore it is expected that those churches which are poor should make their collections for the uses aforesaid, and raise what they can, be it more or less. Moreover we judge that those who have subscribed either to the free-will offering or other contributions for the uses aforesaid, ought in conscience to perform what they have thereby engaged to do: for although, before it was their own, yet after their subscribing it remains so no longer. Acts 5:5. _It is further agreed, that what is or shall be gathered by the free-will offerings not yet paid in, and what is collected or to be collected by subscription, as also what shall be gathered by the first public quarterly collection by all the churches in London and the country, shall be paid in by the twenty-ninth of September next, with a signification of what use or uses they design the money for.

For the better encouragement of this good work, it is agreed as follows(1.) That the trustees put down the particular uses assigned to every particular sum as in the last narrative expressed_(2.) That the sums given to the same use be put together and kept in a distinct account by itself, by brother King and brother Harrison_(3.) That the money given to one use be not disposed of to another_Also that no money should be paid to or disbursed out of the fund but what is agreed on by this present assembly, until this assembly shall by the good providence of God meet again in London in 1692._

The meeting appointed was held the next year in London, from May 3-24, when the associated churches consisted of a hundred and seven. To promote their unity and comfort it was thought expedient__ (1.) That whereas for some years past, the churches have had several associate and county meetings, and one general one in London annually, it is now proposed to divide this general meeting into two, and to keep one in the west and another in London. It is desired that all the churches will send messengers once a year, as may be most for their convenience; and that either from their particular churches, or those that live remote from such association as they think meet to keep_ (2.) That the meeting at Bristol be kept annually at the time called Easter, and that at London at the time called Whitsuntide_ (3.) That two messengers be sent down from London every time to that at Bristol, and also two sent up from that at Bristol to London, for the maintaining of general communion_ (4.) For the better keeping up of the fund, that this method be observed; that all churches make quarterly collections in what way they think best for the encouragement of the ministry, by helping those ministers that are poor, and to educate brethren that may be approved to learn the knowledge of those tongues wherein the scriptures are written_ (5.) That these assemblies are not to be accountable to one another any more than churches are_ (6.) That no churches make appeals to them to determine matters of faith or fact, but propose or query for advice._ (7.) That after both the meetings in the west and east have been held, a general narrative be printed and sent to all the churches, of such matters as may be of general use._

It had long been a subject of much controversy amongst the churches, and the occasion of great troubles and disorders, whether the praises of God should be sung in the public assemblies. It was now agreed by those who had written on both sides of the question, to refer the matter to the determination of seven of the brethren nominated by this assembly; and for that end the following question was put to both parties; viz. _Whether you are willing to be determined by the said brethren, and resolve to do what they shall determine, in order to the removing of all those reflections that are written in all the books printed on both sides about the controversy of singing, &c. The matters to be debated and determined are only respecting reflections and matters of fact._

This question was fully agreed to by Mr. William Kiffin, Mr. John Man, Mr. George Barrette, Mr. William Collins, Mr. Benjamin Keach, Mr. Richard Steed, and Mr. Thomas Hollowell, the persons who were engaged in the controversy.

The seven ministers to whom this decision was referred were Mr. Andrew Gifford of Bristol, Mr. Edward White of Eversholt, Bedfordshire; Mr. Henry Austin of Norwich; Mr. Robert Keate of Wantage, Berks; Mr. John

Wills of Allestrey, Derbyshire; Mr. Samuel Buttall of Plymouth; and Mr. John Scott.

The determination that was read to both parties in the assembly, May 24, 1692, was as follows:--

_We your unworthy brethren whom you have chosen to examine and determine the matter aforesaid, so far as we know our own hearts, have singly, without respect of persons, judged as for the Lord and unanimously concluded, that those persons who have been concerned in this controversy have on both sides erred in most of the particulars that have been laid before us. If we have been partial in any thing, it is only, for which we beg your pardon, that we lay your evils before you in easy terms, from the confidence that the grace of God will help you much more to aggravate them in your own souls; especially when you compare how unlike to Jesus Christ, and the holy commands he hath given for brotherly love, your treatment hath been one towards another; who when he was reviled, reviled not again. 1 Pet. 2:22,23. And how far short in this controversy you have come in answering that character which the Spirit of God gives of true charity. 1 Cor. 13:4. Had the things wherewith you charge each other been true, we humbly conceive you should have taken those rules which Christ hath prescribed in a more private debate, way, and method, that would not have reflected upon your holy profession and the name of God, to convince one another of your errors; and that the ways you have taken to discover the nakedness of your brethren have been irregular, and tended rather to beget greater offences and stumblings, than convincing, healing, and recovering. Ham, for discovering the nakedness of Noah, was cursed of God. To proclaim one another_s errors is from the evil one: and to give our enemies occasion to rejoice over our failings, is forbidden to be told in Gath and Askelon. 2 Sam. 1:20. You know who has said that the issue of biting will be to devour one another, if God prevent not. We grieve to think what dishonour your methods will bring to the name of God, what reproach to your holy profession, stumbling to sinners, and divisions among the churches of Christ. Therefore as brethren, partakers of the same grace, we humbly exhort you, and pray God to make you all sensible of your errors, and humble you for them; and that as God for Christ_s sake hath forgiven you, so you for his name_s sake may forgive one another. And as he is pleased to make you sensible of your errors, acknowledge them one to another, and give us cause of great rejoicing who have been grieved while searching into your uncharitable, unsavoury censures, reflections, and reproaches, which you have in your books loaded one another with, and through temptation have been prevailed upon to take wrong measures and misrepresentations of one another within yourselves. And therefore in the name of the Lord and for his sake we entreat and determine that you proceed no longer in such methods.

_We have also considered and determined, for the prevention of any further reproach an dishonour that may come upon the name of the Lord and your holy profession, that nothing will prove more effectual to this end than that all persons concerned on both sides of this controversy be desired, and we do desire and determine that they should call in and bring all books hereafter mentioned into the assembly, or to whom they shall appoint, and leave them to their disposal. And if any do persist in this reproachful method, we do seriously deliver it as our sense that such persons as sow offences, discords, and divisions, among the churches of Christ, should be marked. We could entreat you upon our knees, could we prevail in this matter, that you would join together to keep the unity of the Spirit, and our holy profession, in the bond of peace.

_Moreover we entreat and determine that it be inserted in the narrative that none of the members of the churches do buy, give, or disperse any of those books aforesaid, nor any other that have those uncharitable reflections in them against their brethren, and that no person do sell or give them to others. The names of the books, some of which we have seen, and all others that have such reflections though not seen, are_A sober reply to Robert Steed_s epistle_Truth soberly defended_A serious answer, &c._Truth cleared, or a brief narrative of the rise, &c._

It must not be supposed by our readers that this general assembly, consisting of a hundred and seven churches, contained all the Baptist churches in England. These were particular Baptist churches; that is to say, they were Baptist churches which rejected the opinions of Arminius. We have found in the course of our history that there were many hundreds of Baptists in Kent; and these were almost all of them general Baptists, or Arminians, who did not own _the doctrines of personal election and final perseverance,_ which doctrines were held by those of whom we have been speaking. That the general Baptists were very numerous in many of the counties is evident from their petition presented to Charles II., which was owned and approved by upwards of twenty thousand. Neither is it to be supposed that this general assembly included the whole of the Particular Baptists, as it is well known there were many churches in Bedfordshire, founded principally by the labours of Mr. John Bunyan, which were not included in it, there being but two churches in this county mentioned in the account. The cause of this was doubtless the difference of sentiment on the subject of communion at the Lord_s table, as these latter did not make baptism on a profession of faith essential to church fellowship, which the former did. Mr. Bunyan wrote in defence of the principle on which their churches were founded; and some other eminent Baptists, as Mr. Henry Jessey and Mr. Vavasor Powel, were of the same sentiment. Mr. Kiffin, Mr. Danvers, and Mr. Denne, wrote on the opposite side; and from the complaints of Mr. Bunyan, it should seem, with some bitterness and acrimony. Such things ought certainly to be avoided, as injurious to the

argument on either side, and utterly inconsistent with the benevolent spirit of the gospel.

There is no doubt but that in this year the western churches, agreeably to the resolution of the assembly the year before, had met in association at Bristol. Be that however as it may, some of them met at Frome on the 29th of March 1692. A manuscript Circular Letter of that date, addressed to the Baptized churches in the west, and signed by Robert Cox, Roger Cator, Richard Gay, Richard Itterly, William Cray, Lancelet Spurrier, Thomas Whinnell, which is in the handwriting of Mr. Andrew Gifford, is in the possession of the author. It contains the following minute;--_Our next association meeting, if God permit, is to begin on the Easter Tuesday, in the morning, at Westbury, at brother Cator_s house, in the year 1693._

From this it is evident, that the Western churches met at different places according to the arrangement of 1691, previously to their general assembly at Bristol, to which all the churches in the West sent their representatives. To this meeting at Easter 1693, two persons were sent from London, and to the general assembly held in London at Whitsuntide, two were sent from Bristol. The proceedings of both these assemblies were published under the title of A narrative of the proceedings of the Elders, Messengers, and ministering Brethren of divers baptized churches in England and Wales, holding the doctrines of particular election and final perseverance, in their general assembly at Bristol on the 19th of the second month, called April, 1693, and continued to the 21st of the same. Also, containing the proceedings of the general assembly held in London the sixth day of the fourth month, called June, and continued till the 12th of the same.

The address from the assembly of Bristol is as follows. The elders and messengers of the several churches of Christ met together at Bristol, from the 19th of the second month to the 22nd of the same, to the respective churches of the same association.

_Dearly beloved and longed after in the Lord,

_The comfortable account we have given and received from most of the churches, their increase and peace among themselves; as also the comfortable union and sweet and amicable communion we have had together in this present assembly, give great cause of rejoicing in the Lord: and we desire that you also may be made partakers of the same joy. But we are greatly grieved that upon any pretence whatever, any one of the churches of Jesus Christ, should withhold its help in the work of the Lord, in such a working day and dispensation, wherein our Lord hath given us an opportunity to promote his interest. Were our hearts enlarged, fitted for his service, and suitable to our opportunity, how glorious and inviting

might the house of the Lord be in our day! But oh! we mourn that we can do no more, and that there should be any found among ourselves to weaken our hands. The security, jealousies, divisions, and worldliness of some in pursuing their own things, and building their own houses, say the time is not come, the time that the Lord's house should be built, as they did Hag. 1:2. Yet certainly it is a time, if not the time, for building: And as we doubt not but God will take pleasure and delight in them that bring the least stick from the mountain to the building of his house, ver. 8, in like manner (to bear with our plainness) we fear a blast from the Lord will be upon those that bring not their offering to the house of the Lord, ver. 6, 9, 10, 11. And therefore as fellow-servants and labourers in the Lord's vineyard, we humbly exhort you with the same prophet in the 5th verse, to consider your ways. We think there is great need of awakening and stirring up our own spirits as well as yours. God's judgments are abroad, though his salvation is yet at home; peace in the gates of Sion, and peace within our borders. The Lord grant that through a cold, lukewarm, careless, divided, uncharitable, indifferent frame of spirit, we may not provoke him to take away peace, and the gospel of peace from our nation, and cause us to feel those judgments which we do not fear (that have fallen terribly upon other parts) because of the house of the Lord that lies waste. If God doth enlarge your hearts to give to the fund, declare your use, and send by your next messenger, and it shall be disposed accordingly. Herewith we have sent you our breviate. Your messengers can give you a further account of our proceedings. The God of all grace give peace, rule amongst you, dwell with you, and richly supply all your wants. This is the earnest desire of

Your brethren waiting for the consolation of Israel.

Signed by us in the name of the whole.

William Gough, George Fownes, William Tanner, George John, James James, Edward Elliott, John Singer, Andrew Gifford, Samuel Buttall, Richard Adams, Benjamin Dennis, Daniel Guillim, Edward Mortimer, William Hankins, Thomas Whinnell, Thomas Warburton, John Ford, James Murch.

_The breviate of the proceedings of the Elders and Messengers of several churches met together at Bristol the 19th of the second month, 1693, and continued to the 22nd of the same.

_The first day was improved in solemnly seeking the face of God in prayer, for counsel, advice, and guidance in our whole work.

_The second day _After seeking the Lord, the letters from the several churches were read, and a particular relation of the state of all the churches

was given in by their several messengers. Some questions were proposed, and the meeting was dismissed with the blessing of God._

Q. Whether a gifted brother may administer in all ordinances?

A. That no private brother (however gifted) if not solemnly called to ministerial office, and separated thereto, ought to administer the ordinances of baptism and the Lord_s supper.

Q. Whether a brother called to the office of elder by the suffrage of the church, may not administer all ordinances, though he be not immediately ordained by the laying on of the hands of the elders?

A. In the affirmative.

Whereas we have heard of some persons, who being vainly puffed up by their fleshly minds, do presume to preach publicly without being solemnly called and appointed by the church thereto, and some to administer all ordinances.

We advise and desire, that every particular church would do what in them lies to discountenance this practice, and to prevent all such from exercising their pretended gift, it being contrary to Rom. 10:15. And also that they would not send forth nor suffer any person among themselves, to preach publicly, of whose qualifications they have not had sufficient trial, and whom they have not called thereto; that the name of God may not be dishonoured, the peace of the churches disturbed, nor the reputation of the ministry blemished.

That we may remove all jealousies, and give satisfaction to all our brethren, that there is no intention or design in this assembly, in relation to the education of youth, to promote human learning or acquired parts above, or to make them equal with the gifts of the Spirit, and the teachings thereof in and by his word, we do unanimously declare:--

1. That we abhor such a principle and practice, being satisfied and assured, that the gift for edification is a distinct thing from acquired parts; and that men may attain the greatest degrees in human learning, and yet notwithstanding be ignorant of Christ, and his glorious gospel.

2. That God does sometimes bestow greater gifts, for the edification of his church, on some who have not attained the knowledge of the tongues, than he doth on some others who have; and that the churches of Jesus Christ should improve what gifts they have, and pray for more.

3. That it is a great snare and very dangerous for any persons to think they can comprehend the great mysteries of the gospel, called the hidden wisdom of God, 1 Cor. 2:7,8, which he reveals unto his people by his Spirit, ver. 10, with their human learning, or worldly wisdom, 1 Cor. 1:19,20,21.

4. That they greatly abuse their knowledge of the tongues who are puffed up thereby to lean upon it, and to despise their brethren, who have the gift for edification, though they have not the same acquired abilities.

5. That the knowledge of the tongues is not in itself essential, or absolutely necessary to constitute a minister of the gospel; nor the greatest degree thereof, without the gift for edification, a sufficient qualification for the ministry; neither,

6. Dare we to limit the Holy One, who bestows the gift for edification upon the learned, as well as the unlearned, and who chooseth some of the wise, prudent, learned, though not many, 1 Cor. 1:16. And that when the knowledge of the tongues and the gifts of the Spirit meet together, and the knowledge of the tongues is made use of in subserviency to the gifts of the Spirit, they ought so much the more to be esteemed as they are made more useful, being beneficial for the conviction of gainsayers, by supplying apt words to convey the truths of the gospel into the understanding of their hearers. Yet when learned Paul plants, and eloquent Apollos waters, it is God only who can give the increase, 1 Cor. 3:6. It is not the gifts of either the learned or the unlearned, but the blessing of God upon the gift of both, that makes successful; that no flesh should glory in his presence, but that he that glorieth may glory in the Lord.

Concluded, that brother Gifford, and brother Fownes, be appointed messengers from this assembly to the general assembly meeting at London upon the time called Whitsuntide.

That the time called Easter next, be the time for this assembly to meet at Bristol: and that the third day of that week be appointed as a day of prayer, and that one of our London brethren do preach at the close of it.

A Narrative of the General Assembly holden in London the sixth day of the fourth Month, called June, and continued until the twelfth day of the same, 1693.

The general Epistle to the Churches.

Dearly beloved in our Lord Jesus,

The great God who hath given us a being in this world, and through our blessed Lord Jesus delivered us when fallen into a miserable state by sin, calls for all both of nature and grace to be employed for his glory; and our continual study should be, how we should give up both soul and body a living sacrifice to him: his service is both our duty and reward, the highest honour and happiness of our nature both here and to eternity. It exceedingly becomes us who are the redeemed of the Lord to say so, and to render the glory of it to him, both in purity of doctrine concerning the grace of redemption, and in holiness of life.

The former your confession of faith has published to the world, which will be a standing monument to your honour in ages to come, as in this age it hath much taken away your reproach amongst all sorts of Protestants. That which remains is a life thoroughly suited to your doctrine, and in this you and we have need to be continually put in mind, that our conversation be as becomes the gospel. Satan endeavours, if he cannot corrupt our heads with false doctrine, to defile our conversation either with a worldly and sensual frame, or to fill us with a spirit of contention and bitterness among ourselves; or towards other saints that differ from us. The holy apostle hath counseled us against his toils, and warned us to look to ourselves, lest any root of bitterness spring up in us. Brethren, ye carry about you the relics of the old man, a body of sin and death, against which as against the evil angels you must maintain a continual war. We have reason, we humbly think, thus to caution you, because we fear, nay too much experience, that this day of liberty, though it hath eased us of the yoke of persecution, hath set the devil upon other methods, and given a lure to our corruptions through our want of watchfulness, which too evidently appears in the decay of piety and charity among us, and a general minding of our own things, not the things of Christ, together with fears and jealousies one of another on account of our assembling these two or three years last past together, and the methods that have been taken for the promotion of the truths of God professed by us, and the assisting of the churches of God with our humble advice and counsel, things so excellent in their own nature: and although in our acting in the first assembly security was given, whereby the power of the churches was fully preserved, yet a great declining appears, both with respect to your sending messengers to this assembly, and to that which met at Bristol, and also with respect to that which was one end of it, the fund for the maintenance of necessitous ministers and brethren gifted to preach the gospel, and also for the educating of young men of inviting gifts for the ministry in learning; a thing of that use and advantage, that time will fully shew the benefit of it, and confirm the arguments that have been used for it. Against this a mighty wind hath been raised, both in this city and all the churches of our way in the nation, as if from hence would follow a neglect of gifts already in the churches, where there is not the advantage of learning: and although

this objection was obviated in the beginning, yet in what follows in this narrative you will see it again removed, if possible, out of the way.

Dear Brethren, we must say, if this day of liberty be lost with trifling and quarrelling amongst ourselves, or from a covetous spirit in us this work of the Lord be hindered, the account will be dreadful, and the next generation may reflect back with grief upon us, that we did not what we could for the service of God and of truth in our generations.

We have cause to bless God that we are on the side of truth; but if we do not labour to clothe and nourish it by the blessings God hath given us, it may suffer exceedingly. There are human ways and means wherein we may be serviceable to truth, and God will require it at our hands if we fail in the performance of them. David blessed God that he and his people had a heart to offer willingly to the service of the temple.

Many worthy ministers have been assisted hitherto by the Fund, and some young men brought up who are likely to be exceedingly useful in their generations, and may in a few years standing shew that the methods designed were not only religious but very prudent.

Brethren, let not this work die in your hands; send cheerfully your messengers the next year either to Bristol or London, and there at least they will behold the good fruit of their fund: and if God please, we purpose here to follow their steps, hoping you will countenance and encourage what you can.

John Tomkins, Richard Adams, Andrew Gifford, Leonard Harrison, Benjamin Dennis, George Fownes, John Ward, William Kiffin, Joseph Harding, Benjamin Gundin, George Richardson, John Scot.

The elders and messengers met at London the 6th day of the month called June, and continued to the 12th of the same.

The first day was spent in prayer to God for counsel and direction in matters that should lie before them, and for a blessing on the churches.

The second day was spent in reading the letters, and taking an account of the state of the churches from their messengers, to whom, in answer to divers questions which they propounded, the advice and resolution of the elders and messengers were given. And with respect to the orderly management of matters, it was resolved.

1st. That every one have his liberty to speak without interruption.

2nd. That if any be of a different opinion from what is proposed, he may have liberty to speak his opinions, and argue with Christian charity.

The proceedings of the assembly at Bristol were read by their messengers, and assented to.

3d. Concluded, that the fund be continued and upheld, according to a former agreement Anno Dom. 1691, and that the money given for the poor ministers of Christ shall be continued, and the money given for the educating of young men of inviting gifts for the ministry in the knowledge of the tongues be appropriated to them.

4th. That a Catechism be drawn up, containing the substance of the Christian religion, for the instruction of children and servants, and that brother William Collins be desired to draw it up.

5th. That the confession of faith of the baptized churches, of the last impression, be translated into Latin with all convenient speed.

6th. That the next meeting of elders and messengers be at London, beginning at the time called Whitsuntide, the 2nd day of the week, and that the next day be kept in prayer._

By comparing the names of persons who attended these meetings it appears, that Mr. Richard Adams and Mr. Benjamin Dennis went from London to Bristol; and that Mr. Andrew Gifford and Mr. George Fownes were deputed by the Bristol assembly to attend the assembly in London.

The next year the Bristol assembly met according to appointment. We have before us an account of their proceedings in manuscript; but we presume it was never printed. It is as follows:--

_The messengers of the several churches hereafter named, viz. of the churches of Sudbury, Plymouth, Looe, Southwick, Calne, Haycombe, Westbury, Melksham, Bridgewater, Taunton, Bristol, Bradford, Lanow, and in the counties of Carmarthen, Cardigan, Pembroke, Brecknock, Monmouth, and Glamorgan, met together at Bristol the 16th of the second month, 1691.

The first day was spent in solemnly seeking the face of God for wisdom, counsel, and direction, and concluded with a sermon suitable to the occasion.

On the 2nd day, (being the 11th of the 2nd month, 1694) after seeking the Lord, the letters from the several churches were read, and an account was taken from the messengers of the state of the churches, and several cases

were considered, and questions answered, &c. These proceedings, with a letter to the churches, were sent to London, addressed as follows:--

To our Honoured and beloved Brethren William Kiffin, and William Collins, to be communicated to the assembly of messengers held in London at the time called Whitsuntide.

Beloved,

The assembly held in Bristol at the time called Easter desired us to acquaint you, that they were grieved because you, who some few years ago did zealously promote such associations for the general good of the churches and the glory of Christ, have declined it. They willingly joined with you, and would still, were you willing. You know how often the country sent to London, whilst you have sent but once to the country, and are weary. Nevertheless to shew their desire of communion with you, they ordered us to send you a copy of their epistle, and of the account of the meeting, both which they sent to the churches that sent them. Moreover they desire you will remember your agreement at your last assembling, and minuted in the narrative that brother Collins should draw up a catechism, and that it should be printed, a thing so needful and useful that the country have been longing to have it, and are troubled at the delay of it, and earnestly desire that you will hasten the printing of it. They suppose that the greatness of the number that will be sold will pay the cost. There had need be thousands of them printed, pray let it be done, and sent abroad to the churches. They think you cannot do any thing that will be of more general use.

With the tender of our hearty respects to you, and our earnest desires for the revival of that good work which has been begun by you, we remain,

Your unworthy brethren, &c._

From this it appears that the zeal of the London churches had greatly declined. It is with pleasure we copy the following extract, because it is honourable to the churches in the West. _We greatly rejoice to find the several churches to which we stand related, manifesting so much hearty and cordial love and good will to our associations, and that our last narrative from this assembly hath been so useful in removing the jealousies and misapprehensions that divers persons, and some churches, had concerning our designs in bringing up several young men, who were gifted brethren, to the knowledge of the tongues in which the holy scriptures were written; a work for God in our generation, which we hope not only the churches in this day will have cause to bless God for, but also the generations to come.

This letter was signed by Richard Gay, William Gough, Thomas Whinnell, Joseph Holton, John Belton, Andrew Gifford, Samuel Hemmen, George Fownes, Edward Elliott, Robert Morgan, George John, Samuel Buttall, Robert Bodenhan, Jeremiah Reed, Joshua James, &c.

The next meeting to be at Bristol, and to begin on Tuesday in the week called Easter 1695._

From this period we apprehend the general assembly was discontinued in London, as we hear no more of any correspondence between Bristol and London, nor of any meeting at the latter place. We have in our possession in manuscript, nearly all the Circular Letters of the Bristol association from the year 1692 to 1730. That for the year 1696 is missing; but we know on the authority of Mr. Thomas's M.S. that it assembled in that year, as some questions were proposed to it by a church in Wales.

Either in this year or the following, the Western churches changed the time of their meeting from Easter to Whitsuntide, at which last time their annual association still continues to be held.

The letter for the year 1697 is so excellent, and contains so much information concerning the state of religion among our churches, that we shall give it at large.

_The elders and messengers of the baptized congregations usually meeting in Haycombe, Southwick, Trowbridge, Bridgewater, Taunton, Westbury, Broadmead, and Fryers, at Bristol, Cardigan, and Carmarthen, Pembrokeshire, Malmsbury, Loughwood and Lyme, and Aberystwith in Monmouthshire; and at Norton in Kilminster: assembled at Bristol the 25th, 26th and 27th of May, 1697._To the respective churches whereunto we stand related, with the multiplication of all grace and peace from God the Father and our Lord Jesus Christ.

Dearly beloved and longed for in our dearest Lord Jesus.

_We return you hearty thanks for sending your messengers to associate with us, and for thereby giving us an opportunity of being acquainted with your state, and of using our joint endeavours for the promoting of the interest of our blessed Lord among you. We hope (through grace) the divine presence has not been altogether wanting in our assembly, but that we have felt some sweet breathings of the Holy Spirit, have experienced some guidance in our consultations and debates, and have been blessed with a joyous preservation in love, peace, and unanimity. Our hearts have been made glad with the account we have received from some churches of the peacefulness of their state, and of their happy increase by reviving additions; but we have been also saddened by an account of the declining

disturbed condition of others. We rejoice with thankfulness that the holy God hath not totally withdrawn himself, and left his churches wholly destitute of any intimations of his favourable presence. But there is just occasion for bitter lamentation to observe how much his glory is departed. We are indeed favoured with a day of gospel liberty, and with a plentiful enjoyment of the means of grace. But alas! where is the answerable fruits? God reasonably expects we should bring forth the fruits of faith, love, zeal, joy, peace, meekness, humility, patience, self-denial, weanedness from the world, longing desires after, and diligent preparations for the glorious appearing of our beloved Lord; with the growth and increase in all these since the means of grace are abundantly affording us. But behold, (and Oh that our eyes may suitably affect our hearts!) instead of these blessed fruits of the Spirit, the cursed fruits of the flesh seem to load our branches. What worldliness, pride, hypocrisy, formality, spiritual sloth, lukewarm indifference, sensuality, addictedness to pleasures, earthliness, jarrings, animosities, contentions, and unchristian carriage are to be found among us! Oh! foolish people and unwise, thus ungratefully to requite our good and gracious Lord. Are these the returns of love and praise, the revenues of honour and of glory, which we owe unto his great name? We may surely say, It is of the Lord's mercy that we are not consumed; that our candlesticks are not removed, and that God hath not pulled down the hedge of his protection, and let in the wild boars of the forest upon us. We yet enjoy the day of his patience; he is waiting upon us to be gracious unto us; he calls after us by his word and awakening rebukes; and he seems unwilling to be gone: Oh! that we may not by our incorrigibleness, and by our continued provocations, drive him away! For woe, woe, wilt be indeed unto us, when the Lord departs from us. But shall we, can we contentedly let him go? God forbid! Let us then stir up ourselves to take hold of him, let us heartily mourn over, humble ourselves for, and implore his gracious forgiveness of, and let us speedily and impartially put away from us, far from us, those things which are an offence unto him, which grieve his Holy Spirit, and which are dishonourable to his sacred Name. Let us diligently, cheerfully, and resolvedly, set about our duty to him. Let us remember from whence we are fallen, and repent, and do our first works. Let our too much forsaken closets be again frequented, our frequent and humble supplications, spiritual meditations, heart searching examinations, be revived there. Let our families be filled with the saviour of God, and our children brought up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. Let not our places be empty in the assemblies to which we stand related, nor filled up only with proud, vain, lifeless, covetous, formal professors. Let every one in his station heartily aspire after the power of godliness, which is now in a languishing state, and endeavour to recommend the ways of God to others, by adorning in all things the doctrine of God and our Saviour; being rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate, walking inoffensively to saints and sinners; shewing forth the praise worthy virtues of that God, by whom we profess to have been called out of

darkness into his marvelous light, living in love and peace, and this is the way to enjoy the God of love and peace amongst us: that we may all thus do, you have our hearty prayers to the God of all peace, and we desire yours. And referring you to your messengers for an account of our proceedings, we subscribe ourselves your affectionate, though unworthy brethren and servants for the Lord_s sake.

Agreed, that the next association be held at Taunton in the Whitsunweek 1698. The Tuesday to be improved in prayer with a sermon in the close to be preached by our brother Gifford.

Signed by us in the name of the whole.

Richard Gay, William Gough, Robert Webb, Edward Elliott, Andrew Gifford, Thomas Whinnell, John Davison, Joseph Matthews, John Webb, George Fownes, Samuel Hemmens, James James, Abel Morgan, George John, Robert Bodenham, Samuel Hunt, William Wilkins.

We have not the letter of the next year, but it should seem the assembly met at Taunton both then and in July 1699. The address to the churches is very serious, but has many of the complaints of the letter of 1697. Differences existed too in some of the churches, which they attempted to reconcile. One resolution respecting singing in the public worship of God we shall notice. _In reply to the church at Bampton, we humbly think those who are not for the practice of singing after the Lord_s supper may, without wrong to their own consciences, leave those to their liberty who are for signing, to stay and sing in the same place where the supper is administered, after those who are not for singing are gone, and this we think will be much more honourable to the name of God and our holy profession than to send away dissatisfied members by recommendation._

It was also resolved _to associate at Exon on Easter Tuesday in the year 170, and that the messengers of every church do provoke the particular church to which they belong to send to the association what they do collect for the fund, and to assign the particular uses, whether towards the more comfortable encouragement of ministers, or the education of youth.

_Agreed also, that there be an association at Bristol, beginning on Tuesday in the Whitsun-week in the said year 1700; and that two persons be approved and sent from the association at Exon above-mentioned to meet with them at Bristol.

_Agreed also, that there be a general association meeting together at Taunton, to begin on Thursday in the week after Whitsuntide in the year 1701, and that both the particular meetings in association at Exon and Bristol be omitted for that year. That brother Whinnell be appointed to

preach at Exon; brother Davison at Bristol; and brother Buttall at Taunton._

This letter was signed in the respective hand-writings of the following ministers:--

Samuel Buttall, Robert Stone, Andrew Gifford, George Fownes, Morgan John, John Burrows, Richard Sampson, John Sharpe, Daniel Harvey, Richard Tidmarsh, Thomas Whinnell, John Hanson, James Hitt, Christopher Frost, Edward Elliott, Ebenezer Wilson, Benjamin Noble, Thomas Bowden.

We have the proceedings of the association the next year at Bristol; and also of the general meeting in the year 1701, at Taunton. We insert the first of these, but must (for the present at least) omit the other, on account of its exceeding the period to which we confine our history.

_The messengers of the several churches of Jesus Christ meeting severally at Calne, Malmsbury, Westbury-Lye, Junisvach, Aberystwith, Glaufcor, Lanwenart, King_s Stanley, Trowbridge, Southwick, Fryers and Broadmead in Bristol; Frome, and brother Sparling with the members under his care, being met together in the city of Bristol the 21st, 22nd and 23rd of the third month 1700; to the churches to which they belong.

Beloved in our Lord Jesus,

_We thankfully acknowledge the great mercy and goodness of our God in giving us liberty and opportunity to meet together to consult his glory, and the good of his Zion. And truly, brethren, we have great cause of joy and rejoicing that we hear that any of the churches of Jesus Christ are in peace, and do prosper in grace, in gifts, and in converts: we can truly say, Would it were the state of all the churches! But alas! Whilst we are endeavouring to rejoice in the goodness of God, and in the prosperity of some, our spirits are overwhelmed with sorrow in considering the heart-breaking estate and the dismal circumstances of others. The several cases laid before us do too plainly discover what sad work the devil, the world, and unmortified corruptions, do make amongst some that fear the Lord in truth. And to speak plainly brethren, it is to us a sad intimation of the presence and glory of God being withdrawn from his people; and a dreadful prognostic of judgments impending: and what can we expect will be our portion, without speedy repentance and timely reformation; but judgments far worse than hitherto any of our eyes have seen? If God has given us liberty of conscience, is it a suitable return to him that we should defile our own, and offend the consciences of others? If we have peace without, is it a right improvement of it to fall upon and devour each other within? What can we expect but either to be devoured of each other, of (if mercy prevent

not by restraining our fury) that our gracious and tender Father should take the rod in his hand, and part and chastise his contending children?

__Brethren, you are not only our joy, but our charge, our flocks, over whom God hath made us overseers, and of whose souls we must give an account to the chief and great Shepherd at the last day. That we may give up our accounts with joy and not with grief, having the testimony of your consciences in conjunction with our own that we have been faithful; we, as your watchmen, seeing your danger and knowing your sin, do now again, as in times past, blow the trumpet and warn you that we may free ourselves from your blood: pray see that you are not self-destroyers. Read at your leisure Ezek. chap. 33. There you may see the duty of a faithful watchman, and what will be the reward of the man that is faithful to his charge, together with the happiness of the people or individual that obey, and the misery of those that will not take timely admonition. It is, beloved, the groans of the spouse of Christ; it is the smart of the gaping wounds of the dear Lord Jesus; it is the languishing state of the interest of our blessed Lord; it is the zeal we have for the name of Christ, and the affection which we bear to your souls, that engage us thus to express ourselves to you. We need not tell you what is your disease; that is plain; but give us leave to suggest to you the causes, and the method of cure. You read that by pride comes contention. Pride, brethren, lies at the foundation of all your quarrels: Subdue then your pride and humble yourselves, and condescend to each other, and your contest will soon be at an end. We beseech you to take the apostle's advice, __Submit yourselves one to another; be clothed with humility; and put on meekness and lowliness of mind, which are of great esteem in the sight of God.__ He will then look upon you with a favourable regard, he will walk with you, he will accept sacrifice from you; yea, he will dwell with you, and you shall dwell with him for ever. Need we say you want love to each other, and therefore cannot bear with, nor forbear each other? Love is a virtue that will do much for peace; it is so far from working ill, that it will not so much as think ill. __Be ye therefore followers of God as dear children; walk in love, and ye shall not fulfil the lusts of the flesh.__ Take the beloved apostle's advice, __Little children, love one another,__ and you will thereby appear to be true disciples of Jesus Christ. Let your love be without dissimulation; let it be with a pure heart fervently. Sympathize with each other's infirmities; consider each other's temptation: forgive each other's sinful provocations, and we doubt not but with the Lord's blessing these things will reconcile you at present, and prevent your future divisions. Brethren, give us leave to provoke you to love and good works: remember the love of Jesus Christ: let it constrain you to forgive and undergo any thing rather than crucify him afresh. Do not grieve nor quench the Spirit of grace, whereby you may be sealed unto the day of redemption. Do not stumble any in, or out of, the ways of God. Let not the way of God be evil spoken of through you. Do not grieve any faithful servant of Jesus Christ. Keep

your garments from being spotted with the flesh. Give no offence of Jew or Gentile, or to the church of Christ: walk worthy of the Lord to all well pleasing, being fruitful in every good word and work. Hereby you will glorify your heavenly Father, and give to others occasion so to do in the day of their visitation. We might propose many things to encourage you, but we will leave that to your particular servant, and not so much as mention what will be the benefits your souls would enjoy in life and at death, if you are found in a conscientious discharge of your duty in this matter. Brethren, to provoke you, (not to glory) we say, that through the goodness of God, the debating of your unhappy differences and divisions hath made no discord nor division amongst us; but that we have done it with calmness of spirit, with moderation, and with mutual forbearance. And we entertain great hope, that as the God of peace hath been with us in consulting, so the blessing of God will follow the advice given, and you will do all in your power to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace. May the breaches in Zion be all made up: may peace and prosperity be always within her walls: may the number of her converts be great: may her gifts encrease, and may her graces flourish: may her weak souls be strengthened: may her disconsolate and her tempted be succoured; and may her backsliding and apostatizing children be restored. May your souls in particular thrive, and may your comforts and enjoyments be great: may you be rich in good works, and lay up for yourselves a good foundation against the time to come. May you be followers of us, and of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises. These things are the sincere desire of your servants for Christ's sake.

Andrew Gifford, William Gough, Thomas Whinnell, John Ford, George Fownes, David Townsend, Robert Wastfield, Ebenezer Wilson, Edward Elliott, James Murch, William Wilkins, John Belton.

Memorandum_It is desired that the messengers of every church do provoke the particular churches belonging to the association; and that in subscribing to the fund, the particular uses be expressed of each subscription, whether it be for the support of poor ministers, or for the education of young brethren. The next association is to be after Whitsun-week.

The following remarks which Crosby makes on the Baptists in general, can only be true respecting the connection which the Particular Baptists in London had with those in the country. _The inconvenience attending the general assemblies of the Baptists by the great distance of some who were to attend them, and the churches being settled in peace and unity, brought the baptized churches into other methods of regulating themselves; so that instead of meeting annually in general bodies, they met together some of them at appointed times, to consult about such things as might have a

tendency to the well-being and good of the whole, and communicated by letters to each other their proceedings and agreements._

From the letters of the Western association we learn what was the state of things among the Particular Baptists at this period. It is very affecting to observe what were the consequences of that case and prosperity which they now enjoyed. We may take up the lamentation of the prophet Amos, and say, _When Ephraim spake trembling, he exalted himself in Israel; but when he offended in Baal, he died._ Persecution for twenty-eight years winnowed the churches, and kept them free from hypocrites and formal professors. Afflictions kept under the corruptions of the people of God, and preserved them from biting and devouring one another. But when the political horizon was cleared, when the sun of prosperity arose upon the nation, and when the sword of oppression was wrested from the hand of the persecutor; then pride, covetousness, worldly mindedness, and the lust of dominion prevailed, and nothing but distraction and misery appeared in many, if not in most of our churches. It is however a consoling reflection, that this spirit was not manifested by the ministers and pastors. These seem to have acted in perfect harmony. Nor does it appear that the discontinuance of the general assembly of all the churches was owing to the ministers in London; it is more probable that it arose from their being unable to prevail on their churches to act in conformity to their wishes. We hear no complains of their assuming any authority over each other. It is impossible to discover that any one of them thought himself entitled to more honour than his brethren in any of their meetings. Their names are signed indiscriminately, without any regard to seniority or to station. The meetings at London and Bristol, for the short period they continued, prove that Ephraim did not envy Judah, nor Judah vex Ephraim. Neither do we meet with complaints that any one of the churches had imbibed any error in doctrine. As yet the confession of faith recommended by the Assembly in 1689, was the standard of doctrine for all our churches. The baneful seeds of Arianism had not yet been sown in the churches of this kingdom. With this the Western churches were afterwards much infected, and by it some of them were destroyed. The faithfulness of the ministers too deserves notice, and is worthy the imitation of their successors: unaffected by the reproaches cast on them for attempting to provide for a learned and useful ministry, they steadily pursued their object. This proves, that whatever were the excuses which prevented the full accomplishment of this design, the ministers were always exceedingly desirous of promoting the improvement of those gifts which the great Head of the church had bestowed for the edification of his people: Covetousness among the hearers prevented that which it was in the hearts of the ministers to carry into full effect.

But here we have to introduce an honourable exception. This is Mr. Edward Terrill, the founder of the Bristol Education Society. The Estate

which he bequeathed at his death in 1686, to the pastor of the church in Broadmead Bristol, laid the foundation of that institution where so many excellent men have been instructed in the way of God more perfectly.

It is not known where the students were educated before the year 1710, when Mr. Caleb Jope was chosen by the church in Broadmead to assist Mr. Kitterell the pastor, and to educate young men for the ministry. That there were some educated before this period is expressly asserted. It is probable that they were placed with different learned ministers, of whom there were many at that time in the denomination, in the same way that the students of the London Education Society have been for several years past.

After giving so full an account of the Particular Baptist churches, it will be necessary to give what information we possess respecting the churches of the General Baptists.

From their origin to about this time they had uniformly agreed with the Particular Baptists, except with regard to the doctrines of discriminating grace.

A few years after the Revolution, at one of their General Assemblies, an event took place which led to consequences that were very injurious to that denomination. We mean the denial of the doctrine of the Trinity, and the imbibing of depreciating views of the person of Christ. The history of this affair is thus related by Crosby.

_Mr. Joseph Wright of Maidstone brought a charge against Mr. Matthew Caffin of Horsham, and insisted on his being excluded both from the assembly, and from all communion with the Baptist churches; and in proof of his charge, alleged several things he had heard from him in private conversation; and in particular, that he had started such objections to certain material parts of the Athanasian creed as amounted to a direct denial both of the divinity and humanity of Christ. Mr. Caffin's answer to these charges was to this effect. _He readily acknowledged that there were some propositions in that creed which were above his understanding, after the most diligent and impartial examination; and therefore he never had nor could as yet receive it as the standard of his faith. He insisted upon it that the holy scriptures contained all that could be necessary for a Christian to believe and profess; that if he were from hence catechized ever so severely, he should not decline a free and open declaration of his sentiments, alleging his belief in Christ as the Word in the beginning of the creation of God, and that he was in the highest imaginable sense God, consistently with that most established truth, that there can be but one absolutely supreme God. He thought Christ was the God over all intended by St. Paul, which he could understand conformably to our Lord's own declarations concerning himself. That as to his flesh, he believed Christ

was the seed of the woman, the son and offspring of David, conceived indeed miraculously, but born of Mary in the same natural way as other children. That it had been his honour and delight to honour his Saviour, both as God and man, to the highest degree of thought. That he had never disturbed the minds of any Christians about unrevealed sublimities, but was willing every one should have the same liberty of judgment that he claimed for himself. That he was far enough from perfection of knowledge; but as his friends well knew, he was always open to conviction, and thankful for every addition of further light._

This defence (says Crosby) gave a general satisfaction to the assembly, which was then very numerous; and Mr. Wright was much discountenanced for his unbecoming reflections and want of charity.

Some time after, at a general assembly held at Aylesbury, Mr. Wright and some other minister who is not mentioned, exhibited a charge of a similar nature against Mr. Caffin, but was again disappointed, as the assembly was determined to maintain unity and friendship with Mr. Caffin, though he might vary in some abstruse unrevealed speculations.

These disappointments caused Mr. Wright to leave the assemblies, and protest against them all. _Yet (says Crosby) the seeds of contention he had sown, sprung up, and brought forth such bad fruit as had like to have been of ill consequence. The churches in Buckinghamshire and Northamptonshire exhibited the like charge to the assembly against Mr. Caffin, and moved that he might be brought to judgment. Mr. Caffin laboured with great meekness and condescension to explain himself, and recover their good opinion, but with little success. So that after their repeated complaints, the assembly agreed that the next year his case should be fully examined. This was to be at Whitsuntide in the year 1700.

_The general assembly at that time being met, and Mr. Caffin being present, to prevent confusion and tedious debate, they appointed a committee of eight persons, four on the side of the complainants, to confer with Mr. Caffin, and to draw up some expedient to be assented to and signed, which might be a sufficient ground of union. This was done, read several times, and signed by those present, and was as follows, according to the account published by the complainants.

_According to the trust reposed in us, we offered to the assembly that it be agreed to, That Christ, as he was the Word, is from the beginning; but in time that Word took on him the seed of Abraham, and as such is Emanuel, God with us, or God manifest in the flesh: and as he is the Word he is one with the Father and the Holy Ghost. As he was God manifest in the flesh, so he is the Jesus who tasted death for every man. And further: whereas there have been and still are debates about the Most High God, we

conceived that he is one infinite, unchangeable, eternal Spirit, and incomprehensible Godhead, and doth subsist in the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost.

William Cooch, Thomas Hirley, William Vincent, Benjamin Miller, David Browne, John Hussum, John Amory, Nathaniel Gale.

_In the assembly's journal, the following clause, which the publishers omitted, is inserted, viz. That the defence which brother Matthew Caffin has made, together with his acknowledgements, are to the satisfaction of the assembly.

At the next general meeting was presented a long letter from the churches in the county of Northampton, complaining that Mr. Caffin was not tried according to their satisfaction. After debating deliberately upon it, it was put to the vote and carried by a great majority, that the declaration which Mr. Caffin had made, and his signing the aforesaid expedient, was sufficient and satisfactory. This however was not sufficient: many of the churches withdrew, and called the assembly Caffinites. For several years the separation continued; but at length, after some essays for a friendly union, it was accomplished; and they united upon the sure foundation of forbearance and charity, adhering to the scriptures only as the complete and only rule of faith and practice.

The sentiments of Mr. Caffin are more particularly mentioned by Crosby in another part of his work. He says, _He could easily understand and heartily assent to all that the scriptures did say concerning either the Father, the Son, or the Holy Ghost; but he used to complain that he did not know what to do when told that he must perish everlastingly unless he believed that the Son is both co-eternal with the Father and also begotten of him. That the Father, Son, and Spirit, must each by himself be acknowledged to be God, to be Almighty, one Incomprehensible, and one Eternal. What others could do he knew not, nor did he envy their penetration; but whenever he went about to understand this scheme, he could not help running into the express contradiction of three eternal almighty persons, and but one such person; that each by himself is God, and yet that each by himself is not God, because there are not three Gods, and but one only. Nor was it easy to him to apprehend how a perfect God, and a perfect man, though ever so closely united, can be any other than two persons, and two Christs, instead of one._

We are surprised that Crosby should bring such heavy charges against Mr. Joseph Wright. He charges him with _having much injured his friend Mr. Matthew Caffin, who in the freedom of conversation, had intimated some doubts respecting the Athanasian Creed; with putting the worst sense on his private discourses, and charging his opinions as blasphemous and

heretical: and finally, with bringing those charges against him at the general assemblies._

It is rather extraordinary too that, notwithstanding Mr. Wright is represented as having acted so injuriously to his friend, Crosby should n another part of his work represent him as _a man of great piety, learning, and usefulness, who promoted the cause of the Baptists very much._ He has however inadvertently borne an honourable testimony to his wroth, by proving that he preferred the cause of God and truth to any consideration of private friendship, or popular odium, in opposing the decisions of the assembly.

It appears to us that Mr. Caffin was an artful person, who, under the pretext of opposing the human explanations of divine and inexplicable subjects, and the damnatory clauses of the Athanasian creed, intended to represent the scriptural doctrines of the Trinity, and of the union of the divine and human natures in the person of Christ, as absurdities which it was irrational for a Christian to believe.

We have inserted his sophistical representation of these sublime mysteries, because the nature of our work seems to require it; but we think it necessary to make some remarks on it, that our readers may be preserved from the infection of the Socinian heresy.

The doctrine of the Trinity, or of three divine persons, or distinct subsistences, in the one Jehovah; as well as that of the union of the divine and human natures in the person of Christ; are matters of pure revelation, which the scriptures plainly assert, but do not attempt to explain; and which all those who receive the scriptures as inspired truth are bound to believe, whether they can comprehend them or not. Had there been no mysteries in divine revelation, there would have been no analogy, in that respect between it and the works of creation; and human reason, unassisted by the Holy Spirit, would have been able to comprehend those things which are the objects of that faith which is the effect of the operation of God. Mr. Caffin indeed said, that he could easily understand and heartily assent to all that the scriptures did say concerning the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. But what did he mean by saying that he understood those things? Did he mean that he perfectly comprehended them? If so, he had by searching found out God, even the Almighty unto perfection! But we presume that neither Mr. Caffin, nor any of those who have adopted his creed, would venture to say that they could understand so as to comprehend either the Eternity, the Omnipresence, or the Omnipotence of Jehovah; and yet these things must be believed and professed by them, if they would avoid the imputation of being Atheists!

Did not Mr. Caffin know that the Scriptures expressly attribute to the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, Omnipotence, Incomprehensibility, and Eternity; whilst at the same time they maintain that there is but one Divine Being? What do the Trinitarians do more? They do not believe that three eternal persons are but one person; nor that each by himself is God, and yet that each by himself is not God; as Mr. Caffin erroneously supposed. Is there no difference between believing that the one divine Being subsists in three persons, and believing that these three persons are only one person? The latter proposition is contrary both to reason and scripture; while the former, at the same time that it is founded upon scripture, is not contrary to reason, although it is beyond the power of reason to comprehend it, in which respect it resembles the mysteries of natural religion, the other mysteries of revealed religion, and the mysteries of creation and providence.

_Where reason fails with all its powers,

There faith prevails, and love adores._

At this period the Baptists both general and particular who were agreed in the doctrine of the Trinity, the divinity of the son of God &c., appear to have been on the most friendly terms. Their different sentiments on the doctrine of Election and Perseverance prevented the union of their churches, but did not prevent their friendly correspondence and intercourse on other occasions. A circumstance which will produce evidence in support of this opinion we shall proceed to mention, in which ministers of both denominations were engaged.

About three months after the revolution there was a public dispute held at Portsmouth between the Baptists and the Presbyterians on the subject of Baptism. The literary champions on the side of the Baptists were Dr. William Russel who was a General Baptist minister of London; Mr. John Williams of East Knoyle, Wiltshire; and Mr. John Sharpe of Frome, who were Particular Baptists. For the Presbyterians were Mr. Samuel Chandler of Fareham; Mr. Leigh of Newport; and Mr. Robinson of Hungerford. The last mentioned person was moderator on the side of the Presbyterians, and Mr. Sharpe on that of the Baptists.

It appears that this debate was held by royal authority, King William had been applied to by the Honourable Major General Earl, governor; Colonel John Gibson, lieutenant governor, of his majesty's garrison of Portsmouth; and by the worshipful Henry Seager Esq. Mayor, to grant leave to the Presbyterians _publicly to vindicate the common cause of the reformed churches_ and to settle the wavering amongst them in the belief and practice of those truths which tended very much to the advancement

of early piety and religion._ [Mr. Chandler_s Impartial Account.
Dedication.]

With this request his majesty graciously complied, and ordered all officers civil and military to attend for the preservation of peace and good order.

The parties accordingly met at the Presbyterian meeting house in High-Street, Portsmouth, on February 22nd 1698-9. The dispute began between the hours of nine and ten in the morning, and continued till between six and seven in the evening in the presence of the above mentioned gentlemen and a large concourse of people.

Before the debate commenced Mr. Chandler delivered the following
Prologue.

_My friends,

_It is not out of pride or vanity that I now appear in this place upon this occasion. Most of you know, and I suppose many of you have heard, that in the course of my lecture here, I have been discoursing of the principles of religion: and having explained the Creed and the Lord_s prayer, did undertake to treat the doctrines of the sacraments, particularly that of Baptism. Those that then heard know, that I spake with a great deal of modesty, calling those who deny Infant baptism by no harder name than mistaken brethren; when I was unavoidably engaged in this disputation by a bold and confident challenge given me, which I knew not how to refuse, unless I would betray that truth which I believe to be the truth of the gospel. They themselves not being able to answer the arguments I then used, have cried out, Men of Israel come and help; and therefore have sent for this gentleman from London. Now I desire that all things may be managed with the greatest fairness and calmness, that we may debate of these matters as Christians, that nothing may be done which is tumultuous or disorderly. And as we have the favour of the government both civil and military, so that we may give them no occasion to repent of giving this liberty. And I hope that we shall all of us be willing to submit to the truth as it is revealed in the gospel, and lay ourselves open to conviction. I have no more to add, but desire all of you to join with me in this one request, That God would grant that truth may prevail._ [Dr. Russel_s Impartial Statement.]

We should have been pleased could we have said that there was nothing tumultuous or disorderly in the course of the debate, but it appears to us from the accounts which were published by both the parties that there were both, and that there was but very little fairness and calmness manifested. We shall not undertake to decide on which side the victory lay. The Presbyterians however claimed it, by an advertisement which

appeared in a public newspaper, called the Post-man, February 25, 1698-9. This was as follows:

_Portsmouth, February 23. Yesterday the dispute between the Presbyterians and Anabaptists was held in the Presbyterian-meeting house. It began at tne of the clock in the morning, and continued till six in the afternoon, without any intermission.

_The theme of the dispute was the subjects of baptism, and the manner in which it is to be performed. Russel and Williams were the opponents for the Anabaptists, and Mr. Chandler and Mr. Leigh defendants for the Presbyterians. Mr. Sharpe moderator for the former, and Mr. Robinson for the latter.

Mr. Russel opposed Infant baptism with all the subtilty and sophistry of the schools; and it was answered with good reason and learning. Upon the whole it was the opinion of all the judicious auditory, the Presbyterians sufficiently defended their doctrines, and also worsted their adversaries, when they came to assume the place of opponents. [Dedication.]

It afterwards appeared that this was sent by Colonel John Gibson the Lieutenant Governor, who gave Mr. Chandler liberty to publish a certificate signed by his own hand June 9, 1699. In this he declares _I say, the above advertisement was inserted, as above, by my direction. I do also own, I was then, and am still of the same opinion as mentioned in the above said advertisement._ [Mr. Chandler_s Account, p. 63.]

On this statement we merely remark, that giving the Lieutenant Governor all credit for having published his own opinion, upon the subject, it did not necessarily follow that all the judicious auditory were of the same opinion.

But the Presbyterians did not stop here, but says Dr. Russel, _We being silent, and not using the same methods as they did to squirt out foolish advertisements in common newspapers, these men grew confident; and upon the first of April following, in the Flying Post, they published a long story full of untruths and silly squint-eyed reflections, not becoming their learning or profession: and all to support a sinking interest. But it appeared so manifestly partial, that there seemed to be but little credit given to it, except by a few of their own party._

Dr. Russel complains exceedingly of the unkind and illiberal treatment which he met with from the Paedobaptists; which we conclude all impartial persons would admit was not without cause, if they could see what Mr. Chandler published as Some just reflections on Dr. Russel_s pretended Narrative.

The circumstances which led to this debate are related by both parties. From those accounts it appears that Mr. Bowes, a minister of the General Baptist church in St. Thomas's street, Portsmouth, and Mr. John Webber, pastor of a Particular Baptist church at Gosport, had publicly opposed Mr. Chandler while he was endeavouring to answer the objections of the Baptists. When a public debate was agreed on, Mr. Bowes proposed Mr. Matthew Caffin on the side of the Baptists; but Mr. Webber objected to this on account of Mr. Caffin's errors respecting the person of Christ: they both agreed in the choice of Dr. Russel.

The consequences of this disputation proved how vain it was to attempt settling such a difference in sentiment in such a way. We are happy to add that this was the last public debate on the subject of baptism in this kingdom: and also, while we deplore the strifes which it produced among brethren, that it was the occasion of several persons being fully convinced of the propriety of the Baptists' sentiments, and did in a few days after submit themselves to be dipped in water. [Mr. Chandler's Account, p. 1,2.] Thus the prayer in which Mr. Chandler wished the people to join him, "That God would grant that truth may prevail," was answered, in a way which, it is likely neither himself or his friends expected.

The end of Volume 1.

A History of the English Baptists

Containing Biographical sketches and Notices of above three hundred ministers and historical accounts, Alphabetically Arranged, of one hundred and thirty churches, in the different counties in England: From about the year 1610 till 1700.

By Joseph Ivimey

1814

London: Printed for the Author

Sutton and Son, Baynes, Gale, Curtis, and Fenner, Paternoster Row; Williams, Stationers' Court; Otridge and Bagster Strand; and Gardiner, Princes Street, Cavendish Square

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PREFACE

THE English Baptists, from the period of the Reformation, have been a numerous class of Protestant Dissenters. In the first Volume of this history they have been considered the descendants of the Ancient British Christians, and also of the Wickliffites and Lollards; as the latter undoubtedly were of the ancient Waldenses. No evidence having been produced since its publication to the contrary, I may be allowed to consider it is as proved.

The present Volume contains notices and historical accounts of above three hundred ministers, and one hundred and thirty distinct churches; founded in the Metropolis and in different parts of the kingdom before the beginning of the eighteenth century. Consequently the aggregate number of those who composed the Baptist congregations could not have been small. For the correctness of their principles, whether political or theological, we refer the Reader for information to their public confessions of faith, and to their printed works. As to the literary character of their ministers, and the utility of their labours in promoting the cause of Christ, let the Reader suspend his judgement till he has perused these Volumes, and then decide. He will find that many of them had been educated at our Universities, and had obtained valuable preferment; but from a conviction (the result of extensive research, and patient investigation) that Infant Baptism ^{vii} was neither supported by the scriptures, nor the writers of the three first centuries, they voluntarily relinquished profitable livings, and took their lot with the poor and the despised. In proof of this assertion we mention without fear of contradiction the names of Canne, Coxe, Harrison, Denne, Knollis, Cornwell, Blackwood, Jessey, Gosnold, Bampffield, Du-Veil, Hardcastle, Fownes, & c. Other names respectable for learning may be added, who had never been ministers of the established church _ such as Kiffin, Delaune, W. Collins, N. Coxe, J. Stennett, Piggott, & c. It is true that many who have been pastors of the Baptist churches have been mechanics and tradesmen; and some of these conducted business in connection with their ministry _ but none will consider these circumstances as dishonourable, who remember that the Apostles were fishermen and tent-makers, whose hands ministered to their necessities; that many who have been but little acquainted with languages or sciences, have yet been conversant with divine truth, and not a little successful in the turning of sinners to God by Jesus Christ; that some of the greatest proficient in learning have acquired it by their own industry after being in the ministry; that those who have laboured with their hands with poor congregations in obscure villages, have by this means carried the gospel where it might otherwise ^{viii} have been unknown; nor should it be forgotten that in many cases the necessity for our fore-fathers labouring, and attending to secular pursuits, arose from themselves and their people being stripped of their property by unjust fines, and cruel imprisonments.

It was the practice of the Apostles to put every kind of gift in requisition, and such is the principle of our brethren in India at this day. Men whom none will reproach for their want of literature, scruple not to encourage every converted native, who understands the gospel, and is _apt to teach,_ to communicate it to those about him; whatever advantages accompany literature, yet to confine the work of the ministry to literary men is to lay an embargo on the progress of the Gospel.

That the Pastors and elders in the Baptist churches have been _faithful ministers of Christ_ we may safely appeal to their indefatigable labours, and their patient sufferings. It will satisfy any unprejudiced person that this statement can be substantiated, who hears the names of Bunyon, Keach, Gifford, Cheare, Gruntham, Griffith, Bampffield, and Delane. But even these, though more public characters than others of their brethren, were yet equalled in labour and sufferings by many, both ministers and private christians, who endured for more than twenty years cruel mockings and scourgings; yea, moreover bonds and imprisonments.

Ix When it is considered how constantly and extensively the Baptist ministers preached the gospel; - the number of persons converted to Christ by their ministry; - and the churches formed by their labours (most of which have continued to the present time) it cannot be doubted but their lives were usefully employed in promoting the cause of _pure and undefiled Religion._ Their histories are proofs also of a ready subjection to the Magistrate in all civil matter; though they afford abundant evidence of their resolving to obey God rather than men; when the commands of men required an act of rebellion against the authority of God.

The printed Volumes of some of these excellent Ministers still remain, as standing memorials of their orthodox principles, their extensive knowledge of experimental religion, and their ardent regard to practical godliness. In these it will be found that though there may have been minor points of difference in the sentiments of the original Baptists, both Particular and General; yet among the former there were none of those who are now designated High Calvinists, nor among the latter any of those now found in the ranks of Arius and Socinus. They all maintained the Doctrine of a Trinity of Persons in the unity of the Godhead; the proper Divinity of Christ; free justification through the imputed x righteousness of Christ; the necessity of personal sanctification, &c. There is abundant proof also, that they addressed the invitations of the gospel to unconverted sinners, and by the most awakening appeals to their hearts called upon them to _repent and believe the gospel._

It is hoped that these Volumes will awaken the attention of the Baptist Ministers and churches to imitate the piety, simplicity, and zeal of their progenitors; who contended _earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints._ Let them ever remember that the principles they profess are those for which Bunyan was imprisoned, and Keach was pilloried _ and on account of which Cheare, Delaune, Griffiths, and Bampffield and many others lost their lives.

Their example too is worthy of imitation, as they strove to promote General Associations of the churches who were agreed in doctrine and discipline; in providing the advantages of literature for young ministers; and in catechising the children of their congregations. The weekly penny subscription that has been so productive and beneficial in the Wesleyan Methodist Societies, was adopted and recommended by a general Assembly of the Ministers and Messengers of more than one hundred churches in London in 1689. Should the Author contribute in any small degree towards exciting a similar spirit in

the xi Baptist Denomination he will rejoice that ever he attempted to produce History of the English Baptists.

The work is composed of materials which were widely scattered, some of which were in scarce Volumes, and others in private manuscripts. He has endeavoured to form a compilation, arranged in the Alphabetical order of the Counties, of whatever related to the English Baptists in Neal's History of the Puritans; Wood's History of the Oxford Writers; Calamy's and Palmer's History of the Nonconformists; Calamy's Life of Baxter; Wilson's History of the Dissenting Churches in London; Brooks's Lives of the Puritans; Sewel's History of the Quakers, &c.&c. He acknowledges with gratitude the assistance he has received from those of his friends who have granted him the use of Church Records, old and scarce books, and valuable Manuscripts.

The writer, who neither wishes nor expects to disarm criticism, thinks it right to mention that the work has been written at the leisure allowed him by various other engagements, and at some periods when much interrupted by bodily indisposition. He is encouraged, however, to hope from the favourable reception given to the first Volume, and the testimonies of approbation he has obtained from Ministers and other persons, of the highest consideration for talents and integrity, xii that the present Volume, which possesses so much to interest of a local and family nature, will be equally acceptable. Should his health be continued and his life preserved, he intends to produce a third Volume, to comprize the events of the Baptist Denomination from the beginning of the eighteenth century till the close of the reign of George the second.

If the reader has tasted that the Lord is gracious, and delights to view the operation of his hands, in his works of providence and mercy towards his people, he will find in this Work many instances of the special care and abundant love of the Lord Jesus. The deliverances wrought for many of his servants whose histories are herein recorded, and the supports afforded them in Prison, and in the prospect of death, are undeniable proofs that as _He himself suffered being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted._

That the God of wisdom and revelation may deign to bless this attempt to preserve these _examples of suffering and of patience,_ and to increase the knowledge and love of Christ, is the fervent prayer of

THE AUTHOR.

London, 20, Harpur Street,
April 19, 1814.

VOLUME II.

Bedfordshire

The History of the Baptists in this county may be traced to an early period. The cause of Nonconformity had obtained great support from many zealous and godly persons in and

about Bedford, long before the year 1650, when the congregational church, now under the pastoral care of the Rev. Samuel Hillyard, was founded.

The records of the church from the year 1656, are still preserved in a folio volume, entitled *_A Book, containing a record of a congregation of Christ in and about Bedford; and a brief account of their first forming._* From this we have derived many of the following particulars.

The ministers of whom we have obtained any information, are,

BENJAMIN COXE, *Bedford*. THOMAS BUNYAN, *Bedford*

JOHN GIFFORD,----- JOHN FENNE,-----

JOHN BURTON----- OLIVER SCOTT,-----

SAMUEL FENNE,----- LUKE ASTWOOD,-----

JOHN WHITEMAN,----- THOMAS COOPER,-----

JOHN BUNYAN,----- EDWARD ISAAC-----

JOHN DONNE, *Pertenhall*. EDMOND WHITE, *Evershall*.

THOMAS MARSOM, *Luton*. NATHANIEL ALCOCK.

S. HOWTHERNE, *Steventon*. WILLIAM DELL, *Yeldon*

Nonconformity of Mr. Coxe.

Mr. Benjamin Coxe. In the letter of Captain Deane, to Dr. Barlow, bishop of Lincoln, vol. 1 p. 294. Mr. Coxe is mentioned as a minister at Bedford, after the abolition of Episcopacy. He was, it is said, son of a bishop, probably of Dr. Richard Coxe, bishop of Ely, one of the compilers of the Liturgy. [The liturgy was compiled in 1549. Our Mr. Coxe may have been born in the old age of his father, and if so, it is possible this opinion is well founded. It is, however, more likely he was a *grandson*.] This conjecture receives some confirmation from his being called an *ancient* minister, by Mr. Richard Baxter in 1644. [*Gangraena*, Part I. p. 65.] After having been graduated in one of the universities, he seems to have obtained a living in the diocese of Exeter. Edwards, in his *Ganraena*, says he came out of Devonshire, and charges him with having been an innovator and great time-server in the Bishop's time, bringing innovations into the church against the will of Dr. Hall, then bishop of Exeter. From this it appears, that he was a zealous Nonconformist clergyman, who much wished to promote a reformation in the established church. It is probable that he received an appointment to one of the parishes at Bedford from the *_Assembly of Divines_* soon after 1640. We have no account when he embraced the principles of the Baptists, but his name is signed to the *_Confession_* of the seven

churches in London, in 1644. He resided in London at this time, and was doubtless the pastor of one of the churches who published this confession. In this year, we find him engaged in a dispute at Coventry on the subject of baptism, with the famous Richard Baxter, who was chaplain to the garrison. A society of Baptists being collected at Coventry, gave much uneasiness to the Presbyterians, and Mr. Coxe (who is stated by Mr. Baxter to be a minister of competent learning and parts) came down to *confirm* them, and when he had done so awhile he departed. But, on his coming the second time, he was summoned before the *_Committee_* to answer for his conduct; and because he would not promise to leave the city, and come no more, he was committed to prison. Mr. Baxter says, some of Mr. Coxe's party gave out this was at his request, which he positively denies, but says, he and his influence got him out. Mr. Baxter adds, *_At this time I desired Mr. Coxe would entertain some disputes concerning our differences, which was consented to, and begun by words, and afterwards we agreed to follow it by writing: but to my first paper I never could have answer, (save to the extempore writing before at our meeting) and so that labour ended._* Mr. Baxter charges him with teaching the people that the Presbyterian ministers being unbaptized, were indeed no ministers of Christ, and that it was unlawful to hear them, or join with their people, though never so godly, because they were unbaptized persons. *_It is absurd to suppose that Mr. Coxe should say unbaptized ministers were not ministers of Christ, though it is highly probable he taught, that a church composed of baptized believers, should admit none to membership but baptized persons.*

In 1645, we find him in London, engaged with some others to maintain a public dispute with Dr. Calamy. This was prevented by the interference of the Lord Mayor; but Mr. Coxe afterwards published a work entitled, *_A Declaration concerning the public dispute which should have been in the public meeting-house in Aldermanbury, Dec. 3, 1645, concerning Infant Baptism._**

Repents of his Conformity

It is not known where he was employed in the ministry after this period; but it should seem he accepted a *living*, probably from the *_Triers,_* who admitted many baptists to parochial charges. There is some confusion in Crosby's account of him. In one place he says, he was ejected from his living, but from what place he could not find. In another that he conformed when the Act of Uniformity was passed in 1662, but adds, *_he was so grieved for what he had done, that he gave up his living, and died a Nonconformist and a baptist._*

We have no account of the place of his death. His attachment to the cause of Nonconformity, in the former part of his life, makes it remarkable that he should be induced to conform in his old age. Unless indeed it was to procure his liberty from prison, as it is probable he may be the person mentioned in the life of Mr. Grantham, who was in Lincoln Goal in the year 1660. +But if like Cranmer, he was led through weakness and unbelief to give up his principle, like him too he repented of his apostacy, and returned to his former sentiments.

Crosby says, he had heard but of one book published by Mr. Coxe, besides that above mentioned, vi.. *God's ordinances the Saints' privileges: proved in two treatises. First, The Saints' Interest by Christ in all the privileges of grace cleared, and the objections against the same answered: Second, The peculiar interest of the Elect in Christ and his saving grace: wherein is proved that Christ hath not suffered for the sins of all men, but only for the sins of those who do, or shall believe in him, and the objections against the same answered.*

- *Plain Scripture Proof.* Pref. By Richard Baxter. London 1651.
- + See our Account of Lincolnshire.

His writings

Wood in his *Athenae Oxon*, says, p.134. that _Mr. Blake wrote an answer to B. Coxe about *free* admission to the Sacraments. There was a piece also published by a Mr. Coxe against _the errors of Thomas Collier. _This was recommended by Mr. Daniel Duke.*

The reason why Mr. Coxe is introduced in Bedfordshire, where he laboured but for a short time, is on account of his being in all probability, the first person who preached and propagated the principles of the baptists in this County. He it was, it is likely, who baptized some of those persons who were first united in church-fellowship at Bedford, and formed that society which still flourishes, and has continued prosperous from that period.

The first pastor of this church was Mr. John Gifford, who with eleven others, about 1650, + agreed to walk together in christian communion. The history of this transaction and of Mr. Gifford, is written in the Bedford church book, with great correctness. It appears to have been related by Mrs. Negus, a member of the church, and a daughter of Mr. Gifford, about 40 years after her father's death.

*Crosby. Vol. i. 220. 353. iii. G.

+ These were John Grue, Matthew Grew, John Eston, sen. John Gifford, Anthony Harrington, Joan Coventon, Elizabeth Mannoh, Hannah Venne, Margerett Bosworth, Mary Spencer, Sister Norton. It is probable some of these were the women whom Bunyan heard speaking of the New Birth, &c. and who afterwards introduced him to Mr. Gifford. See his Life, p. 32, 51

Origin of the Church at Bedford.

A brief Account of the first gathering the church at Bedford.

_IN this town of Bedford, and the places adjacent, there hath of a long time been persons godly, who in former times (even while they remained without form and order as to visible church communion according to the Testament of Christ) were very zealous according to their light, and not only to edify themselves, but also to propagate the gospel, and help it forward, both by purse and presence; keeping always a door open, and

a table furnished, and free, for all such ministers, and christians, who shewed their zeal for, and love to the gospel of Christ. Among those, that reverend man Mr. John Grew was chief, also Mr. John Eston, sen. and brother Anthony Harrington, with others: men that in those times were enabled of God, to adventure in shewing their detestation of the Bishops, and their superstitions. But, as I said, these persons with many more, neither were, nor yet desired to be embodied into fellowship according to the order of the gospel; only they had in some measure separated themselves from the prelatical superstition; and had agreed to search after the nonconforming men, such as in those days did bear the name of Puritans.

_But when it pleased God (who had before appointed that holy ordinance of communion of saints) to shew this mercy to this people; he placed Mr. John Gifford among them for their minister in Christ Jesus, and to be their pastor and bishop, and the steward of God to communicate to them the knowledge of his will, in the holy mysteries of the gospel. Of whom (because there appeared a more than ordinary hand of God in his call to the ministry and his place and office among them) take this sort relation of him, both before and after grace received.

Account of Mr. John Gifford

_Mr. Gifford was a Kentish man, a great Royalist, and an officer (viz. a Major) in the King's army, he had also his hand in the rising that was in that County; for which he was also apprehended, and adjudged with eleven more to the gallows. But the night before he was to dye, his sister coming to visit him, and finding the sentinels that kept the door asleep, and those also his companions within heavy through drink: she told him of the door, and the watch, that stood before it; and intreated him to take the opportunity to escape, and save his life; which also he did, and passed through them all, there being as it were a deep sleep from the Lord upon them, and made his escape into the field, and creeping into the bottom of a ditch lay there about three days, till the great search for him was over, and then by the help of his friends he came disguised to London; where he abode not long but was conveyed down into this County, where also he lay hid from his enemies, in the houses of certain great persons, who were of like mind with himself: and after a while he came to Bedford, and there being utterly a stranger, he professed and practiced physick; but abode still very vile and debauched in life, being a great drinker, gamester, swearer &c. But in his gaming so it was, that he usually came off by the loss, which would sometimes put him into some dumpish and discontented fits, and resolutions to leave the practice; but these resolutions were like the chains on the man mentioned in the gospel, which could not hold when the fit to be vile was upon him, wherefore he went on and broke them still. But one night having lost, as I take it, about 15 pounds, it put him into a rage, and he thought many desperate thoughts against God: but while he was looking into one of Mr. Bolton's books, something therein took hold upon him, and brought him into a great sense of sin, wherein he continued for the space of a month or above; but at last God did so plentifully discover to him by his work, the forgiveness of his sins for the sake of Christ; that (as he hath by several of his brethren been heard to say) all his life after, which was about the space of five years, he lost not

the light of God's countenance, no not for an hour, save only about two days before he died.

_But when it had pleased God thus to awaken this man, he sought forthwith to get acquaintance with those godly persons that are above mentioned, but they would not at first believe that he was a disciple; yet he would enquire after their meetings, and being naturally bold, would thrust himself again and again into their company, both together and apart; yet they had jealousies about him, for he had indeed been a very vile man; and had also in the town attempted in a very rude manner to do several actions that bespoke such extravagancy of mind, and wildness or vileness of heart. Besides, as himself did after say, he often had thoughts to kill brother Harrington, merely from that great antipathy there was in his heart against the people of God, and the holiness of the gospel. But so it was that in a little time he was much in his heart put upon it, to preach; but yet would not unless he advised first the godly; but they being at the stand in the case, he first offered his gift before them in private, and afterward in an open way before the world, whose word God so blessed, that even at the first he was made through grace a father to some through the gospel. For instance, sister Cooper, a woman whose memory is yet precious among us, was converted by the first sermon he preached in public.

Mr. Gifford chosen Pastor

_Now having preached a while and receiving some light into the congregational way, after some acquaintance also with other ministers, he attempted to gather into gospel-fellowship the saints and brethren, in and about this town: but the more antient professors, being used to live, as some other good men of those times, without regard to such separate and close communion, were not at first so ready to fall into that godly order.

_Wherefore many days were by him and them set apart for prayer to God to seek of God light and counsel therein: they also conferred with members of other societies; and at last by the mercies and goodness of God, they began to come to some blessed resolution therein.

_And first, they consulted, after they had determined to walk together in the fellowship of the gospel, and so to build an house for the name of our God, who were most expedient to begin to be laid in this building as foundation stones. And at length twelve of the holy brethren and sisters began this holy work.*

_The manner of their putting themselves into the state of a church of Christ, was, after much prayer and waiting upon God, and consulting one with another by the work; being met, after prayers, and seeking God as before, with one consent they jointly first gave themselves to the Lord, and one to another by the will of God.

(*The holy caution of these good people in founding a *congregational* church, proves that their dissent did not originate in a dislike to the *doctrines* of the Parish minister, as is often the case in the present day; nor to the *ceremonies* and *liturgy*, as the

churches were then occupied by Presbyterians; but to the *principle of admitting the civil Magistrate as the Head of the church*, which they considered repugnant to the scripture maxim; _One is your Master, even Christ._)

The Principle on which founded

_This done they with one mouth made choice of our brother Gifford to be their pastor or elder, to minister to them in the things of the kingdom of Christ , to whom they had given themselves before; wherefore brother Gifford accepted of the charge, and gave himself up to the Lord, and to his people, to walk with them, watch over them, and dispense the mysteries of the gospel among them, under the consideration by which he was chosen of them.

_Now the principle upon which they thus entered into fellowship one with another, and upon which they did afterward receive those that were added to their body and fellowship, was Faith in Christ, and Holiness of Life, without respect to this or that circumstance or opinion in outward or circumstantial things. By which means grace and faith were encouraged; love and amity maintained; disputings and occasions to janglings, and unprofitable questions avoided; and many that were weak in the faith confirmed in the blessing of eternal life.

This principle was maintained in the church to her mutual comfort and deification. He also of his care to the congregation, to persuade them to continue in the faithful maintaining of the above named principle among them with many other exhortations tending to peace and holiness, and brotherly love; which epistle here under followeth.

To the church over which God made me an overseer when in the world_

_I beseech you brethren beloved, let these following words, (written in love to you, and care over you, when our heavenly Father was removing me to the kingdom of his dear Son) be read in your church-gathering together.

His Dying advise

I shall *not now*, dearly beloved, write unto you about that which is the first, and without which all other things are as nothing in the sight of God, viz. The keeping *the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience*. I shall not, I say, write of these things (though the greatest) having spent my labours among you, to root you and build you up in Christ through the grace you have received; and to press you to all manner of holiness in your conversation, that you may be found of the Lord without spot, and blameless at his coming.

_But the things I shall speak to you of, are about your CHURCH AFFAIRS, which I fear have been little considered by most of you; which things if not minded aright, and submitted unto according to the will of God, will by degrees, bring you under

divisions, distractions, and at last to confusion of that gospel order and fellowship which now through grace you enjoy.

_Therefore, my brethren, in the *first* place I would not have any of you ignorant of this, that every one of you are *asmuch bound now to walk with the church in all love and in the ordinances of Jesus Christ our Lord, as when I was present among you*: neither have any of you liberty to join yourselves to any other society, because your pastor is removed from you; for you were not joined to the ministry, but to Christ, and the church; and this is and was the will of God in Christ to all the churches of the saints, read Acts 2:42 and compare it with Acts 2:46. And I charge you before the Lord, as you will answer it at the coming of our Lord Jesus, that none of you be found guilty herein.

Secondly *Be constant in your church assemblies*. Let all the work which concerns the church be done faithfully among you; as admission of members, exercising of gifts, election of officers, as need requires, and all other things as if named, which the scripture being searched will lead you into, through the Spirit; which things if you do the Lord will be with you, and you will convince others that Christ is your Head, and your dependency is not upon man; but if you do the work of the Lord negligently, if you mind your own things and not the things of Christ, if you grow of indifferent spirits whether you mind the work of the Lord in his church or no, I fear the Lord by degrees will suffer the comfort of your communion to be dried up, and the candlestick which is yet standing to be broken in pieces; which God forbid.

The admission of Members

_Now concerning your admission of members, I shall leave you to the Lord for counsel, who hath hitherto been with you; only thus much I think it expedient to stir up your remembrance in; that after you are satisfied about the work of grace in the party you are to join with, the said party do solemnly declare (before some to the church at least) that *Union with Christ is the foundation of all saints' communion*; and not merely [your agreement concerning] any ordinances of Christ, or any judgment or opinion about externals; and the said party ought to declare, whither a brother or sister, that through grace they will walk in love with the church, though there should happen any difference in judgement about other things.

_Concerning separation from the church about baptism, laying on of hands, anointing with oil, psalms, or any other externals, I charge every one of you respectively, as ye will give an account of it to our Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge both quick and dead at his coming, that none of you be found guilty of this great evil; which some have committed, and that although zeal for God yet not according to knowledge, they have cried from the law of the love of Christ, and have made a rent in the true church, which is but one.

Doctrinal Sentiments

I exhort you, brethren, in your comings together, Let *all things be done decently and in order*, according to the scriptures. Let all things be done among you without *strife and envy*, without selfseeking and vain glory. Be clothed with humility, and submit to one another in love. Let the *gifts* of the church be exercised according to order: let no gift be concealed which is for edification; yet let those gifts be chiefly exercised which are most for the perfecting of the saints. Let your discourses be to build up one another in your most holy faith, and to provoke one another in love and good works: if this be not well minded much time may be spent, and the church reap little or no advantage. Let there be strong meat for the strong, and milk for babes. In your assemblies avoid all disputes which gender to strifes, as questions about externals, and all doubtful disputations. If any come among you who will be contentious in these things, let it be declared that you have no such order, not any of the churches of God. If any come among you with any doctrine contrary to the doctrine of Christ, you must not treat with such an one, as with a brother, or enter into dispute of the things of faith with [unscriptural] reasonings; but let such of the brethren as are fullest of the Spirit, and of the word of Christ, oppose such an one stedfastly face to face, and lay open his folly to the church from the scriptures. If a brother through weakness speak any thing contrary to any known truth of God (thought not intended by him) some other brother of the church must in love clear up the truth, lest many of the church be laid under temptation. Let no *respect of persons* be in your comings together; when you are met as a church there is neither rich nor poor, bond nor free in Christ Jesus. 'Tis not a good practice to be offering places and seats when those come in, [who are rich] especially 'tis a great evil to take notice of such in time of *prayer*, or the word; then are bowing and civil observances at such times not of God. *Private wrongs are not presently to be brought into the church*; if any of the brethren are troubled about externals, let some of the church (let it not be a church business) pray for and with such parties.

Discipline

_None ought to withdraw from the church if any other *brother should walk disorderly*, but he that walketh disorderly must bear his own burden, according to the scriptures: if any brother walk disorderly, he cannot be shut out from any ordinances before church censure.

_Study among yourselves what is the nature of fellowship, as the word, prayer and breaking of bread; which whilst few, I judge, consider seriously, there is much falling short of duty in the churches of Christ.

_You that are most eminent in profession set a *pattern* to all the rest of the church. Let your faith, love, and zeal be very eminent: if any of you cast a dimmer light, you will do much hurt in the church.

_Let there be kept up among you *solemn days of prayer and thanksgiving* and let some time be set apart to seek God for your *seeds*, which thing hath hitherto been omitted.

_Let your *deacons* have a *constant stock* by them, to supply the necessity of those who are in want; truly brethren there is utterly a fault among you that are rich, especially in this thing; _tis not that little which comes from you on the first day of the week that will excuse you. I beseech you be not guilty of this sin any longer. He that sows sparingly shall reap sparingly. Be not backward in your gatherings together: let none of you willingly stay till part of the meeting be done, especially such as would be examples to the flock.

Choice of a Pastor

_One or two things are omitted about our comings together, which I shall here add. I beseech you forbear *sitting in prayer*, except the parties be any way disabled; tis not a posture that suits with the majesty of such an ordinance; would you serve your prince so? In prayer let all affected expressions be avoided, and all vain repetitions: God hath not gifted, I judge, *every* brother to be a mouth to the church. Let such as have most of the demonstration of the spirit, and of power, shut up all your comings together, that you may go away with your hearts comforted and quickened. *Come together in time*, and leave off orderly; for God is a God of order among the saints.

_Let none of you give offence to his brother in indifferent things, but be subject to one another in love. Be very careful what gifts you approve of by consent for public service.

_Spend much time before the Lord about choosing a pastor, for though I suppose he is before you whom the Lord hath appointed, yet it will be no disadvantage to you, I hope, if you walk a year or two as you are before election; and then if you be all agreed, let him be set apart, according to the scriptures.

_Salute the brethren who walk not in fellowship with you with the same name of brother and sister as those who do.

_Let the promises made to be accomplished in the latter days, be often urged before the Lord in your comings together; and forget not your *brethren in bonds* *. Love him much for the work_s sake who labours over you in the word and doctrine.

*We are at a loss to account for this, as there was no persecution during the protectorate of Cromwell.)

How to act when destitute

Let no man despise his youth. Muzzle not the mouth of the ox that treadeth out the corn to you. Search the scriptures; let some of them be read to you about this thing. *If your

teachers at any time be laid aside, you ought to meet together as a church and build up one another. If the members at such a time will go to a public ministry;+ it must first be approved of by the church. Farewell, exhort, counsel, support, reprove one another in love.

_Finally, brethren, be all of one mind: walk in love one to another, even as Christ has loved you and given himself for you. Search the scriptures for a supply of those things wherein I am wanting. Now the God of peace who raised up our Lord Jesus Christ from the dead, multiply his peace upon you, and preserve you to his everlasting kingdom, by Jesus Christ. Stand fast: the Lord is at hand.

_That this was written by me

I have set my name to it, in the

Presence of two of the brethren of

The church. JOHN GIFFORD_

The writer of this excellent pastoral letter, died September 21, 1655. All who read it must acknowledge that the heart which could dictate such a letter in the immediate prospect of dissolution, must be that of a christian bishop, who was eminently qualified to feed the church of God. To him belongs the honour of founding a church, which has to the present time closely adhered to its original principles, and has always experienced peace and prosperity.

Mr. Gifford was a baptist, but did not consider the baptism of believers as an essential requisite for church fellowship. The famous Henry Jessey of London had founded a baptist church on the same principle a few years before this period.

*Many of the Baptists opposed this principle

+This refers to the Parish ministers

His Usefulness

In Mr. Gifford the riches of divine grace were fully manifested. _Preserved in Jesus Christ, _ even while in a state of rebellion against God, he was plucked as a brand from the burning; and when called to a knowledge of the gospel, he became a faithful minister of Christ. His dying Epistle is a monument to perpetuate his eminent knowledge of the gospel, he became a faithful minister of Christ. His race was short but glorious. His labours were apparently confined to a narrow circle, but their effects have been very widely extended, and will not pass away when time shall be no more. We allude to his having baptized, and introduced to the church, the wicked Tinker of Elstow. Bunyan in his _grace abounding, _ mentions his kindness in conversing with him, and in inviting him to his house to hear him confer with others about the state of their souls. He was

doubtless the honored Evangelist who pointed Bunyan to the _wicked gate_ by instructing him in the knowledge of the gospel; by turning him from darkness to light and from the power of Satan unto God. Little did he think such _a chosen vessel_ was sent to his house, when he opened his door to admit the poor, the depraved and the despairing John Bunyan.

Mr. Burton chosen Pastor

JOHN BURTON. It is likely Mr. Gifford alluded to this minister when he says in his letter, _I suppose he is before you whom the Lord hath chosen._ If this conjecture be well founded, he was a young man, for it is added, _Let no man despise his youth._ Mr. Burton was a baptist, and is spoken of as the minister of the church in 1656, when the records commence. It is probable he was called to the pastoral office immediately after the death of Mr. Gifford. He was greatly interrupted in the work of the ministry by bodily indisposition. With some others he united in supporting a lecture at Westening in 1656, and at the request of the church, agreed to spend an hour in the week to exhort the prisoners in the county goal.

From the frequent prayer-meetings held on his account by the church, he appears to have had a strong hold of their affections. But neither their prayers nor tears availed; he was removed by death in August 1660, and was greatly lamented.

We know but little of him. He is mentioned in Bunyan's _Vindication of Gospel Truths_, as being engaged in controversy with the Quakers, who began to increase, and propagated many dangerous errors. His name appears to a recommendation of this work with those of Richard Spencely, and John Child, * who were members of the Church. It was during his pastorship that Bunyan began to preach in the villages about Bedford.

Not long before his death, the 29th of the 10th month, December 1659, the church resolved that _some of the brethren (one at a time) to whom the Lord may have given a gift be called forth, and encouraged to speak a word in the church for our mutual education._ Bunyan was one of these, who it should seem had already begun to distinguish himself as a writer, as the work we have mentioned was written during the life of Mr. Burton.

*Of this Man, and his awful end, we shall speak at large in another place.

Persecutions of the Church

Immediately after the death of Mr. Burton, the church was assailed by persecution. Some of her most eminent sons, and many of the members, were dragged in prison. In November 1660, the same month that Bunyan was apprehended, we find the church agreeing to set apart the second day of the week to seek the Lord by prayer. In another place it is recorded that through an increase of trouble, the meetings of the church were neglected till August 28, 1661. They had, however, invited a person to succeed Mr. Burton in the pastoral office. This was Mr. Wheeler, a minister of the church at Newport

Pagnell: but this invitation was given up on account of Mr. Wheelers_srefusal, December 10th, 1660. The church continued destitute as well as afflicted for three years, when two of their brethren, Mr. John Whiteman and Mr. Samuel Fenne, both baptists, were called to the office of *joint-pastors* and were ordained over them in the Lord. This service is thus related; _10th Month, 1663. The church (notwithstanding the sore persecutions now come upon them) having spent many days in fasting and prayer, to seek a right way of the Lord in this matter, did jointly make choice of our brother Samuel Fenne, (now lately delivered out of prison) and brother John Whiteman, for their pastors or elders, to minister the word and ordinances of Jesus Christ unto them; and they at this meeting did solemnly before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, and the Elect Angels, give up themselves to serve, feed, and watch over this congregation, for Jesus_ sake, according to the charge laid upon them, and accepted by them, according to the measure of grace received._

Mr. Fenne and Mr. Whiteman

SAMUEL FENNE. This worthy man was probably a son of Mrs. Fenne, one of the first twelve members, and who died May 9, 1684. He joined the church, August 28, 1656. In November, 1660, he was called to exercise his gifts before the churches a probationer for the ministry. Soon after this he was imprisoned, and was probably a companion of Bunyan, at this time in Bedford goal. Released from prison, he returned to his own company and undertook at this perilous time to become a pastor of the church. The time to favour zion was come, and at the end of this month December, 1663, some were *added* to the church, which is thus recorded; _God appearing in his glory to build up zion, there were with joy received into this congregation five persons._ For four years and a half after this period, there is no account of any church-meeting. The spies and informers were so vigilant, and the Conventicle Act so strictly enforced, that they could not meet for the purpose of church discipline.

On October 30, 1668, they came to a resolution that as many of the friends in these troublous times had withdrawn themselves from close walking with the church, after having kept certain days of fasting and prayer, bewailing their fall, that brethren Fenne, Bunyan, and others, should visit those who had neglected attending their assemblies. One circumstance that occurred from these visits deserves to be recorded, as it shows the spirit of an apostate member.

_At a meeting of the congregation the 21st of the 10th month, 1669, Humphrey Merrill was cut off from and cast out of this church of Christ, for, 1. Breaking covenant with God. 2. For an open recanting his profession at a general Quarter Sessions. 3. And rejecting and trampling upon the admonitions and entreaties, and all endeavours of the church to recover him to amendment of life; disdainfully returning for their care and endeavours to reclaim him, such ungodly reviling as these _ That they had their hands in the death of the king-- that they were disobedient to government _ and that they were not a church _ together with many other false and heinous accusations. Testified by these brethren, John Croker, Thomas Cooper, Samuel Fenne, John Bunyan, and William Man.

Joint Pastors

Mr. Fenne was joint pastor of the church at the period of the severe persecution in 1670, recorded in vol. I. p. 372, and had his share in the affliction which resulted from it. He died November 12, 1681, after serving the church eighteen years. His death was greatly lamented by the congregation; and _many days of fasting and prayer were held on account of the loss they had experienced._ His trials were many, his fortitude great, his ministry useful and his end happy.

JOHN WHITEMAN. That he was an excellent man is evident from his undertaking the pastoral office, when by so doing, he was exposed to so much difficulty. He is frequently mentioned in the records, and appears to have died about 1672, as his name does not appear after the 29th of August in that year. It has been generally thought that at his death Mr. Bunyan was chosen joint pastor with Mr. Fenne; but this is evidently a mistake, as Mr. Whiteman survived the period of Bunyan's ordination, and was doubtless one of _the Elders who gave him the right hand of fellowship._

Bunyan called to the Ministry

JOHN BUNYAN. It has been already mentioned that this extraordinary man became a member of the church during the ministry of Mr. Gifford, and soon after it was founded. In the year after the death of his kind friend and instructor, when he had been awakened upwards of five years, he was strongly solicited by some members of the church, who were most distinguished for judgement and holiness of life, to speak a word of exhortation among them. With this he complied, and soon began preaching in the villages about Bedford. Great attention seems to have been attracted, and much opposition excited: as he says, _The Doctors and Priests of the country began to open wide against me._ In the next year, 1657, an indictment was preferred against him at the assizes for preaching at Eaton, and a meeting of the church was called to consult what was to be done respecting it. From this it appears that the Presbyterian ministers, now in possession of the livings, could not bear with the preaching of an illiterate tinker, and an unordained minister. What, however, could not be accomplished during the life of the Protector, was carried into effect immediately after the restoration of the King. His apprehension and subsequent trial, and imprisonment for twelve years in Bedford goal has been recorded in vol. I. p 299-306, and may be more fully seen in his _Life_.

The friendship of the jailor was so great at the first part of Mr. Bunyan's imprisonment, that he attended the meetings of the church, and was employed in visiting disorderly members. This liberty was however soon prevented, the jailor having exposed himself by the favour shewn him to the displeasure of the magistrates. The straitness of his confinement led him to turn his thoughts to other employment than that of preaching the word, which was the occasion of producing one of the most popular and useful books in the English language.

Chosen Pastor

During the last four years of his imprisonment, he was permitted to attend the meetings of the church. This doubtless was privately, but his name always appears to the

records of this period. On October 24th, 1671, it was recommended to the church that they should seek to God to make his way plain to them, respecting the propriety of calling him to the pastoral office; and two months afterwards, there is an account of the congregation, after much seeking to God by prayer and sober conference, signifying their joint consent by solemn lifting up of hands to call him to this office. It is added, also, that _he at the same time, December 21, 1671, accepted the invitation and gave up himself to serve Christ and his church in that charge; and received of the Elders the right hand of fellowship._ It should seem from this account that Mr. Fenne and Mr. Whiteman resigned the pastoral office to him, and were considered afterwards as Elders or ministers.

Mr. Bunyan was now the pastor of a considerable congregation, which had the preceding year experienced heavy trials from the operation of the Conventicle Act. How he could exercise his pastoral office in preaching among them while he continued a prisoner in the goal, we are at a loss to conceive. His liberty, however, was not obtained till 1672, in which year the church held a day of thanksgiving for _present liberty._ This was doubtless on account of the Indulgence granted by King Charles II, and it is not improbable but Mr. Bunyan might avail himself of a license to secure himself from the malice of his enemies, as he afterwards did of the indulgence of James II, in 1687.*

*If Grantham Killingworth, (says a respectable Correspondent) is correct, the church at Bedford was originally formed on the plan of strict communion. He says, in his answer to Dr. Foster_s sermon on Catholic communion, page 34. _As to the pretence with which Philocath concludes his performance, _that if *promiscuous communion* were to be universally put in practice, the Baptists would have the best opportunities for recommending and supporting their sentiments _ and consequently, instead of being diminished, they would be in a fair way of becoming exceedingly more numerous; _it is entirely without foundation. For in this case, truth and facts are too stubborn to yield to mere pretences. John Bunyan, I believe, was the first who tried the experiment; upon which many of his members, who greatly disapproved it, left him, and assembled together in a chamber by themselves, so long as most of them lived; and Bunyan himself, as I have been informed, lived to see his error and lamented his conduct therein, before he died: for so many paedobaptists had been admitted by him, that the majority of his church were unbaptized, and after his demise, having chosen an independent for their minister, they gradually became, and still remain, a paedobaptist congregation._

This account is certainly founded upon mistake. Our readers will have observed from Mr. Gifford_s letter, that the church was established upon the most free principles. See page 24. From him Bunyan adopted the sentiment; and there are no instances upon the church book of any objection to this plan during his pastorship.

His Death

The Indulgence of Charles was published in March, 1672, and in August the ground on which the meeting house at Bedford stands, was purchased by subscription. By the voluntary contributions of Mr. Bunyan_s friends a large house was erected, in which he

continued to preach to large audiences, till his death, which happened in London, August 31, 1688.

No sooner had this afflictive event been announced at Bedford, than a meeting of the congregation was assembled on Wednesday, September 4th, to keep a day of prayer and humiliation *_for this heavy stroke (say they) upon us, the death of our dear brother Bunyan._* Similar meetings were held at the different places in the neighbourhood where the church assembled.

Church Letter

The remains of this celebrated man were interred in Bunhill fields, London. The tomb erected to his memory, has on the left side facing the road, this plain inscription: Mr. John Bunyan, Author of the *Pilgrim's Progress*, ob. 12th August, 1688. Aet. 60* _

We introduce the following letter to shew the regard paid to discipline by the church at Bedford, during the pastorship of the venerable Bunyan; an example worthy the imitation of all the churches of Christ. The person to whom it was sent, Mrs. Mary Tiley, mentioned vol. I. p. 371, had removed to London to reside. She had signified her wish to commune with a church in London of which her son-in-law, a Mr. Blakey, was the Pastor. The reply seems to have been written by Mr. Bunyan:

_Our dearly beloved sister Tilney. Grace mercy and peace be with you by Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

I received your letter, and have presented it to the sight of the brethren, who after due consideration of your motion, have jointly concluded to give you their answer.

This for yourself, (honoured sister,) you are of high esteem with the church of God in this place, both because of your fruitful fellowship with us; for you have been a daughter of Abraham while here, not being afraid with any amazement.

Your holy and quiet behaviour also, while with patience and meekness, and in the gentleness of Christ, you suffered yourself to be robbed for his sake, hath the more united our affections to you in the bowels of Jesus Christ. + Yea it hath begotten you reverence also in the hearts of them who were beholders of your meekness and innocency while you suffered; and a stinging conviction, as we are persuaded, in the consciences of those who made spoil for themselves: all which will redound to the praise of God our father, and to your comfort and everlasting consolation by Christ in the day he shall come to take vengeance for his people, and to be glorified in them that believe.

*This is a mistake, he died the 31st of August

+ See Account of the Persecution at Bedford, 1670. Vol I p. 364-376

Wherefore we cannot, (our honoured sister,) but care for your welfare and increase of all good in the faith and kingdom of Christ, whose servant you are, and whose name is written in your forehead; and do therefore pray God and our Father that he would direct your way and open a door into his temple for you, that you may eat his fat and be refreshed, and that you drink the pure blood of the grape. And be you assured that with all readiness we will help and forward you what we can therein, for we are not ashamed to own you before all the churches of Christ.

But, our dearly beloved, you know that for our safety and your profit, that it is behoofful that we commit you to such, to be fed and governed in the word and doctrines, as we are sufficiently persuaded shall be able to deliver you with joy, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all his saints: otherwise we (that we say not you) shall receive blushing and shame before him and you. Yea and you also, our honoured sister, may justly charge us with want of love, and a due respect for your eternal condition: if for want of care and circumspection herein, we should commit you to any from whom you should receive damage; or by whom you should not be succoured, and fed with the sincere milk of the incorruptible word of God, which is able to save your soul.

Church Letter

Wherefore, we may not, neither dare give our consent that you feed and fold with such whose principles and practices, in matter of faith and worship, we as yet are strangers to; and have not received commendations concerning, either from works of theirs or epistles from others. Yourself indeed hath declared that you are satisfied therein: but elect sister, seeing the act of delivering you up, is an act of ours and not yours, it is convenient, yea, very expedient, that we as to so weighty a matter be well persuaded before.

Wherefore, we beseech you, that for the love of our Lord Jesus Christ, you give us leave to inform ourselves yet better before we grant your request; and that you also forbear to sit down at the table with any without the consent of our brethren. You were, while with us, obedient, and we trust you will not be unruly now. And for the more quick expedition of this matter, we will propound before you our further thoughts.

- 1) Either we shall consent to your sitting down with brother Cockain, brother Griffith, brother Palmer, or other who of long continuance in the city, have shewed forth their faith, their worship, or good conversation with the work.
- 2) Or if you can get a commendatory epistle from brother Owen, brother Cockain, brother Palmer, or brother Griffith, concerning the faith and principles of the person and people you mention, with desire to be guided and governed by; you shall see our readiness in the fear of God, to commit you to the direction and care of that congregation.

Choose you whether of these you will consent unto, and let us know of your resolution. And we beseech you for love's sake, you shew with meekness your fear

and reverence of Christ's institution; your love to the congregation, and regard to your future good.

Exclusion of a Member

Finally, we commit you to God and the word of his grace; who is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among them that are sanctified. To God the only wise be glory and power everlasting .Amen.

Your affectionate brethren, to serve you in the faith and fellowship of the gospel.

Sent from Bedford the 19th John Bunyan Sam Fenne

Of the 4th month, 1672 John Fenne Nah. Coxe

From another letter, bearing date the 15th of the 7th month, we find that Mrs. Tilney refused to comply with these directions. They however continued to enforce their advice. There is no account how the matter terminated.

Another instance of congregational church discipline, in 1671, is thus related; _Robert Nelson excluded, because in a great assembly of the church of England he was profanely *Bishopt* after the antichristian order of that generation, to the great profanation of God's order, and heart-breaking of his christian brethren._

To give a brief sketch of his life and labours, we add, His character is almost universally considered of unrivalled excellence, after he knew the grace of God in truth. The affecting history of his depravity before his conversion is faithfully recorded by himself in his _Grace abounding to the chief of Sinners;_ but the grace of God taught him to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts. For more than thirty years he maintained an irreproachable character, though much exposed to temptation, and narrowly watched by his enemies. As a minister he stands almost pre-eminent for his talents, his labours, and his success. While in prison, he constantly preached to his fellow prisoners, and it is said, that through the lenity of his jailor, he was often out in the night and that many of the churches in Bedfordshire owe their origin to his midnight preaching.

Bunyan's Popularity

After his enlargement from prison, for upwards of fifteen years, his labours in travelling through the country to confirm the churches were very great, and procured him from his enemies the epithet of bishop Bunyan. In London; which he frequently visited, his preaching attracted great attention; three thousand persons, it is said, have been collected before breakfast to hear him at one day's notice. Among his auditors was his friend and admirer, Dr. John Owen. Charles II, it is reported, once asked the Doctor, how he who had so much learning could hear a tinker preach? To which the Doctor replied, _May it please your majesty, had I the tinker's abilities for preaching, I would most gladly relinquish all my learning._

As a *writer*, Bunyan is inimitable. His style is simple and unadorned, but luminous and natural. All his arguments and illustrations are drawn from the scriptures, and prove his extensive knowledge and deep penetration. His imagination was strong, fervid, and beautiful; and faithfully consecrated to the cross of Christ. Whatever is his subject, man is humbled, Christ is exalted, and God is glorified.

His Character

He wrote sixty books, several of which were printed, and the others prepared for the press before his death. The *Pilgrim's Progress* has gone through more editions than any book almost in the English language. It has been translated into many of the European languages: and it is said a copy of it is preserved in the Vatican at Rome. His other works possess various degrees of excellence, but in this he has excelled them all. If the universal approbation of Christians of all denominations, during nearly one hundred and fifty years, and which remains unabated, and the testimonies of the most eminent literary men to its merit, are sufficient to stamp a book with the character of unrivalled worth, then Bunyan's *Pilgrim* is the book. It is so contrived as to allure the young to read the most interesting religious discussion without fatigue; to afford instruction to the enquirer after truth, and to edify the aged and most established Christian. It is, perhaps, not too much to assert that no book of human composition has been of greater use to the Church of God.

Out of many testimonies which may be produced, we select one, at once expressive of the taste and piety of the excellent but dejected Cowper.

_O! thou who borne on Fancy's eager wing,
Back to the season of life's happy spring,
I pleased remember; and while memory yet
Holds fast his office here can ne'er forget;
Ingenious dreamer! In whose well-told tale,
Sweet fiction, and sweet truth alike prevail:
Witty and well employed, and like the Lord
Speaking in parables his slighted word;
I name thee not, lest so despised a name
Should raise a sneer at thy deserved fame;
Yet even in transitory life's late day.

That mingles all my brown with sober grey.

Revere the man whose *Pilgrim* marks the road,

And guides the *Progress* of the soul to God._

Works.1. Gospel Truths opened.2. A Vindication of some gospel truths opened.3. Grace abounding to the chief of sinners.4.A Confession of my faith and a reason of my practice.5.Difference in Judgement about Water Baptism, no Bar to Communion, &c.6. Peaceable Principles and true, &c.* (*These three were written in defense of mixed communion.) 7.The Doctrine of the Law and Grace unfolded.8. The Pilgrim_s Progress.First Part written in Prison _ The Second some years afterwards.9.The Jerusalem Sinner Saved, &c.10.The Heavenly Footman11.Solomon_s Temple12.The Acceptable Sacrifice13.Sighs from Hell14.Come and Welcome to Jesus Christ15.The Pharisee and Publican16.Of Justification17.Paul_s departure and Crown.18.Of the Trinity.19.Israel_s Hope encouraged. 20.The Life and Death of Mr. Badman.21.The Barren Fig Tree.22.An exhortation to Peace and Unity.23.Of the Law.24.The One Thing needful.25.The Holy War.26.The Desires of the Righteous.27.Christ a complete Saviour.28.The Saint_s Privilege.29.The Saint_s knowledge of Christ_s love.30.The House of the Forest of Lebanon.This is a figure.31.Of Antichrist.32.Salvation by Grace.33.Christian Behaviour.34.Of Prayer.35.The Strait Gate.36.Light for them that sit in Darkness.37.Instruction for the Ignorant.38.The Holy City.39.The Resurrection of the Dead.40.Watchfulness against Sin.41.Exposition of the ten first chapters of Genesis.42.The Advocateship of Jesus Christ.43.Seasonable Counsel.44. Divine Emblems.45.Meditations on 74 things.46.A Christian Dialogue.47.A Pocket Concordance.48.Account of the Author_s Imprisonment.49.On Election and Reprobation.50.Defence of Justification against Bp. Fowler, 1671.51.On the Fear of God.52.Oh the Soul, 1683.53. Advice to Sufferers, 1684.54. A Holy life the heart of Christianity, 1684.55.The first-day Sabbath.56.Of the House of God, 1668.57.The Water of Life, 1688.58.Ebal and Gerizim.59.Prison Meditations.60.His Last Sermon, July 1688.

Thomas Bunyan

Mr. Bunyan left a widow, and four children by a former wife.*Thomas*, his eldest son, joined the church soon after his father_s enlargement from prison,June 6, 1673.He is mentioned in the church books as a *preacher* in 1692.It is a little singular that this circumstance should never have been made known to the public; but it is probable that he was only occasionally employed, and never rose to any eminence in the ministry.

Neither grace nor gifts are hereditary._Promotion cometh neither from the east nor from the west; but the Lord is judge, he setteth up one, and putteth down another._John Bunyan, with no advantages of learning or connections, rose to the highest promotion amongst dissenters, and has been universally known and admired; while Thomas, with all his father_s instructions and influence, lived unknown and died unnoticed, except in the

immediate circle of his labours. The period of his death is not mentioned, but he was upwards of forty-five years a member of the church at Bedford. He was employed in visiting the disorderly members till December, 1718. This proves him to be a man of a good character for judgement and piety, as none but such are deputed to this office in our churches.

John Fenne

On the day of Mr. Bunyan's ordination the following persons were called to the work of the ministry, it is said, _for the furtherance of the work of God, and carrying on thereof in the meetings usually maintained by this congregation, as occasion and opportunity shall by providence be administered to them._ Viz. John Fenne, Oliver Scott, Luke Astwood, Thomas Cooper, Edward Dent, Edward Isaac, and Nehemiah Coxe.

Of Mr. Coxe we shall speak in the history of London ministers. All the others, it is likely, were persons in business, who preached occasionally as their services were required by the congregation, which was then composed of persons at Gamlingay, Haynes, Cotton-end, Kempston, Easton, &c.

Mr. Fenne was a deacon of the church, chosen to that office, December 10, 1671, _because (say they) the congregation having had long experience of his faithfulness, they committed their poor and their purse to him._ He is mentioned in our account of the persecution in 1670, as the person at whose house the meeting was held, vol. I. p. 366. On this occasion _ he took joyfully the spoiling of his goods._ He continued an active member till his death, October 3, 1705 so that from the time he was called to the ministry and to the office of deacon, was thirty-five years. In the account of his death he is called _our honourable brother Fenne;_ a character which he doubtless well deserved.

Ministers at Bedford

Mr. Thomas Cooper. Mentioned as a sufferer for Nonconformity, vol. I. p. 370. In the time of the Rev. Mr. Chandler, who succeeded Mr. Bunyan, and who was a paedobaptist, Mr. Cooper baptized the adults of the congregation who were of the baptists' sentiments. He died about 1719.

Mr. Oliver Scott, died at Bedford, April 21, 1687.

Mr. Astwood and Mr. Dent lived till after 1695; but of the time of their deaths we have no information.

Mr. Edward Isaac. The reader may find some account of the manner in which he was treated in the persecution of 1670. Vol. I. p. 370

The history of this church is truly remarkable. Composed originally of twelve persons, it soon increased to a very considerable number, and was blessed with an

abundant supply of *gifts* by the great Head of the church, for the work of the ministry, and to edify his mystical body. These gifts were all employed according to the degree of ability possessed by the different members. Being clothed with humility, each appear to have esteemed others better than himself, and thus kept the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace. For more than twenty years, persecution tried the sincerity of the profession of its numerous members, and produced such different effects that the histories of these persons, it is probable, furnished the characters of Bunyan's Pilgrim, as he thus describes his design, -

-----_I writing of the way

And race of saints in this our gospel day;

Fell suddenly into an Allegory

About their journey, and the way to glory._

Awful Death

We shall conclude our account of this church by mentioning an instance of the divine displeasure against a person whom they designated by the epithet of the *_Grand Informer._*

This was one Feckman, mentioned in vol. I. p. 372._A most violent and thirsty persecutor at Bedford. His father, who lived at Turvey, left him a very considerable estate, in addition to which he had a good portion with his wife. In a few years he spent all in lust and extravagance, and then became an *Apparitor*, and kept a public house in Bedford. When the Conventicle Act was renewed in 1670, he boasted that he should raise an estate out of the fines levied on the Nonconformists. He accordingly engaged in prosecuting them with extraordinary rage; _seeming (say they) more like a purveyor for, and a resemblant of satan, than the officer of a *christian* court._ A few days after June 3, 1670, attending a *visitation* at *Amptill* in virtue of his office, he was taken ill with a violent bleeding, till he died in consequence five days afterward. During this period he was in great pain, often reviling the *fanaticks* and sometimes blaming the Justice, Mr. Foster, for putting him in the office. His wife, according to his request, wished to bury him at Turvey, but all the gentlemen, and even the carrier, they say, refused to lend their coaches for the purpose of conveying the body, so that she was under the necessity of getting it conveyed in a cart._

This is one instance out of many that were observed, of the unhappy lives and miserable end of those persons who were zealous in the work of persecution. The care which God exercised over his suffering people, and the judgements which he sent on those who afflicted them, were a striking comment of the declaration on the Psalmist, _Verily there is a reward for the righteous, Verily there is a God who judgeth in the earth._

Mr. John Donne

Mr. John Donne. It is said in the *Nonconformist Memorial*, vol. I. p. 284. that Mr. Donne was ejected from Pertenhall in this county, and that he had been educated at King's College, Cambridge. This living was a good value, he therefore did not trouble any of his parishioners for tithes. He was very charitable to the poor, and a hearty lover of good men. After his ejection he lived at *Keysoe*, in the same neighbourhood. Here he collected a congregation, amongst whom he took pains, preaching constantly on Lord's days, and sometimes on week-days. Being disturbed at his meeting, he did not desist, but preached the word in the wood and other obscure places. At length he was imprisoned at Bedford, and continued there for some years, which occasioned an ill habit of body, and hastened his end. He left a widow and five children, with but little to support them; but the providence of God preserved them from want. He was a man of great faith and courage, though such was his natural timidity that he would say, "Were it not for Christ, the shaking of a leaf would affright me."

Prisoner with Bunyan

To this account we add, Mr. Donne was a fellow-prisoner with Bunyan, between whom there had been a previous intimacy. In March 1660, he was invited to assist the church at Bedford, in consequence of the illness of Mr. Burton, by preaching and breaking of bread once every month during his affliction. From this it is evident that he had now resigned his parochial charge, as the Presbyterian discipline would not have admitted his giving assistance to sectaries. The account, therefore, of his being ejected by the Act of Uniformity in 1622, must be incorrect. Mr. Gibbs and Mr. Wheeler, of Newport Pagnell, were invited at the same time, and for the same purpose. After Mr. Burton's death, another invitation was given April 15, 1662, to these ministers and to the famous Francis Holcroft, at Cambridge, to assist the church. This seems to have produced a difference of sentiment among the members, as to the propriety of the pastor of one church administering ordinances in another church, of which he is not the pastor; and we find they resolved to ask advice of the pastors in London of the congregational discipline -- whether the pastor of one church administers the ordinance of the supper to another church, and upon what scripture grounds they do it, or refuse? It is not said how this question was answered: but a difference of sentiment still exists among *Baptists* on this subject. Dr. Gill warmly opposes the doing it, and says it is quite as inconsistent as for the mayor of London to exercise his authority in the city of Bristol. Others think that the administration of the supper is not absolutely a *pastoral* but *ministerial* act, and therefore comply on the same principle as they think it right to preach to a destitute church, but whom they are invited. It is always, however, confined to those who have been invested with the pastoral character by a regular ordination. We have no account of the period of Mr. Donne's death. The congregation collected by him at Keysoe, and which must have been formed on the same principles as that at Bedford, as Mr. Donne was a baptist; still continues, though in an obscure place, to be respectable.

Church at Luton

Thomas Marsom. He was the founder and first pastor of the church at Luton. He is recorded as an inhabitant of Luton and a member of the church at Kensworth in Hertfordshire, in 1675. There is no doubt but he was called to the ministry by this church during the pastorship of Mr. Thomas Hayward. Immediately after Mr. Hayward's death, in 1688, when the whole of the church was assembled at Kensworth, they elected Mr. Marsom, with Mr. Finch and Mr. Harding, to be joint elders, to serve the church in breaking of bread and administering all ordinances.

He did not long continue a pastor of the church. In less than two years, a circumstance happened which caused a division and laid the foundation of the church at Luton.

From the records of the church at Kensworth it appears that, in 1675, when the names of the members were entered, there were 19 persons who resided at Luton, two of whom were Mr. Marsom and his wife. The occasion of the separation we have mentioned was as follows. It being resolved by the church that one of the Elders should receive maintainance in order to his being wholly employed in the service of the church; Mr. Harding was fixed upon for this purpose. Mr. Marsom appears to have objected, and by his influence brought down Mr. Russel from London upon trial. Not being approved, he returned to London, and it is said, there was no difference among the people on his being rejected. After this Mr. Marsom provided Mr. Titmas to come upon approbation. Respecting his services, it is said, One part of the church did like, the other did not approve of him; but by a joint consent he was paid for his time and went away in the year 1690.

Church Letter

The rejection of Mr. Titmas gave such offence to Mr. Marsom, that he did (as they say) declare against the said brethren that did not approve of brother Titmas, and so took the occasion to draw away a certain number of members, and made a rent in the church as it is declared in the said book.

Mr. Marsom did not attend the General Assembly in 1692. The probable occasion of this was, that the church was founded on the principles of mixed communion. This supposition is supported by the circumstance of a member belonging to the church at Bedford being dismissed to the church at Luton, immediately after it was formed. This dismissal is dated December 20, 1689, and is as follows,

The church of Christ in and about Bedford, to the church of Christ in Luton, walking with our beloved brother Marsom; wisheth you may abound with all grace and peace through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Beloved brethren,

We having been acquainted with the desire of our beloved sister Sara Tomkins, widow, and as we hope a widow indeed, who is one of us, but by divine providence of late her habitation is with you. She being sensible of the want of Christ's ordinances and the communion of saints, is desirous of being admitted by you, unto all the ordinances of Christ in his church; that she may be helped forward in her christian course: and we considering the great end of Christ our Lord in ordaining the communion of saints, is his own glory in their edification, therefore to be promoted by us according to his own rule; and hoping you are of that good and sound principle, as to have communion *with saints as they are saints*, though they may differ in their judgements as to some circumstantial things. Therefore we pray you in the bowels of our Lord Jesus Christ receive her into all the ordinances of Christ Jesus our Lord. She is of a sound faith and of a holy life; and has given good proof of her love to Christ. Signed *John Fenne, John Croker, William Hawkesy, John Bardolph, Anthony Harrington, Ed. Shepherd*, and the rest.

Death of Mr. Marsom

Mr. Marsom continued pastor of this church till his death, January 1725-6. His funeral sermon was preached by Mr. John Needham, of Hitchin; and was published under the title of *The peace and happiness of the church, the affectionate concern of a good man.* It dedicated to Mr. Thomas, Mr. Nathan, and Mr. Samuel Marsom. These were sons of the deceased, who are addressed as having lost a kind and excellent father, and charged not to indulge that uncommon mourning to which a reflection on their loss would naturally lead. The sermon concludes with an account of Mr. Marsom, who is designated an honoured servant of Jesus Christ.

As to temper (says Mr. Needham) he was kind and affable. He was of a very sympathizing disposition towards his fellow christians in their afflictions and distresses of what kind so ever. He was liberal, bountiful, and charitable, in administering to the necessities of the poor, and promoting the preaching of the gospel. He was peaceable and useful in his neighbourhood, and I doubt not but his neighbours bear in their own minds a testimony, that he was a good and useful man.

His Character

As a christian, he was one that set out in his youth for God. He did not delay till old age, the great concern of his soul. He set out well and soon; and held on his course: and indeed the way to hold on to the end is to begin betimes, God was pleased to give him bright and special tokens of his love. It is about threescore years since he had the sealing evidences of the love of God to his soul; so that in his temptations he was not left to doubt and despond, as the generality of other christians are; but was maintained in a steady belief and hope of his acceptance with God in Christ, and this he retained till the last. He had much communion with God, and in some instances in an extraordinary manner.

As a minister, he was sound in the faith, and fixed in his principles; and yet did bear an universal love to those that had the holy image of God and Christ. He did not confine religion to his party, but loved all good men. He was an able minister of the new testament, and God did instruct him rightly to divide the word of truth, and give to every one his portion. The Lord continued him long in the ministry, even upwards of 50 years, and he was enabled to make a comfortable reflection thereon, that his rejoicing was, that in simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God, he had his conversation in the world, and fulfilled his ministry amongst you. He was one that did not only preach the truth of the gospel, but in a day of persecution and trial stood by it.

—He took joyfully the spoiling of his goods, knowing in himself that he had in heaven a better and an enduring substance. Thus was he a tried servant of Christ. The Lord was graciously pleased to own and crown his labours with abundant success. Many are now in heaven to whom he was a spiritual father, and there are many living witnesses in this congregation of the efficacy of the word of God upon their hearts by his ministry. In a word, he adorned his doctrine by an holy life and conversation. He lived what he preached

For a conclusion, I shall speak a few words concerning his last hours. He lived in a frequent and serious thoughtfulness of his latter end: and it pleased God, which is very remarkable, to give him such a death as he desired, though this is not what we may. —*

* Mr. Marsom was one of the publishers of Mr. Ewer's work against Infant Baptism. His name is signed to the recommendation.

Church at Steventon

Steven Howtherne. He was pastor of the church at Steventon. This church was of antient date; but we know nothing of any minister before him. It is probable they were destitute of a minister in 1656, as it was resolved by the Church at Bedford, the 26th of the 4th month, as follows. — That the members of the Church at Steventon may break bread with us, and we with them, as the Lord shall give opportunity. — From this it is evident that these churches were intimately connected with each other. Mr. Howtherne became its minister soon after its formation. He attended the general Assemblies in 1689 and 1692, in company with John Carver, of whom we have no information.

The following letter was sent by the church at Steventon, in 1692, to the church at Bedford, after Mr. Ebenezer Chandler, a Paedobaptist had become its pastor.

Dismission of a Member

—Brother Chandler,

This may inform and certify you and your brethren concerning our brother Savage, that he hath been a member with us in full communion *for many years*, all which

time he hath been in our estimation a sober, wise, and holy christian, and is so still. But on the 17th of June last past, he came to our church meeting, and did desire his dismissal from us, giving us his reason for it; which did so far satisfy us, that upon some consideration we did agree and conclude to grant his desire. And for as much as we understand he desireth to join with you at Bedford, we are well satisfied with it, and do desire you to receive him in the Lord, and to give him a place among you, and so watch over him and be helpful to him, for his spiritual comfort and edification, as a fixed actual member of the church at Bedford. So committing you and your brethren to the work of his grace, who is able to build you up and give you an inheritance among them that are sanctified; we remain your brethren in the Lord, who subscribe this in the name of the church at Steventon.

Steventon, July 27, 1692.

STEVEN HAWTHERNE,

Daniel Negus

Edward Bull

Thomas Laurance

Tho. Lowell

Mr. Joseph Such, the present pastor of the church at Steventon writes as follows, -

September 21, 1810

_I have now before me an old church-book from which I make the following extract. _1673. About eighteen years ago, some of the faithful in Christ did gather together at Steventon, in the county of Bedford, for to walk in the commandments and ordinances of the Lord with their beloved brother and teacher Stephen Howtherne, their overseer. Mr. Howtherne lies buried in a farm-yard where the meeting-house (a barn) then stood; many others lie there also. There had been in 1763, about sixty persons united in fellowship, among whom is mentioned *John Read*, asleep in Jesus, he was a teacher, and was also appointed to break bread to the church as an elder, in the chief brother's absence, and to baptize believers. _This church has given rise to several others, viz. College Lane, *Northampton*; *Carlton* and *Sharnbrook* in this county. Our present place of meeting was built in the year 1723. _

In 1691, this church had united in an association with another at Haddenham. Vol. 1 P. 516.

Church at Evershall

Edmond White. He was pastor of the church at Evershall, both in 1689 and 1692. See vol. I. p. 503. Dr. Rippon says in a note. _In the list of 1689, he is called *Edward*, in that of 1692, *Edmond*, the latter is his name, as appears by the old church book; the variations however are preserved in several places where his name occurs. _We have no account of his death, but his name is signed to the Baptist confession of Faith, the third edition, in 1699.

Palmer mentions a Mr. White ejected from Melling in Lancashire, and a person of the same name from Sealby in Lincolnshire, but whether either of these was the same person, we have no proof.

Mr. William Dell

William Dell, M.A. He is mentioned vol. I. p. 328, amongst the ejected Baptist Ministers. By the act of Uniformity he lost his living at Yeldon in this County, worth about 200 pounds per annum; and also his situation as Master of Gonvil and Caius College, in the University of Cambridge; where he had received his education. Before the civil wars, he had a living in the established church, and was pleased with episcopacy and the ceremonies; but no sooner had the change in the state led to a reformation in the church, then he appeared among the most forward to promote it, and was desirous of carrying it much farther than others would allow. He exclaimed against making a whole kingdom a church; he thought that no power belonged to the clergy but what is spiritual; that blending the civil and ecclesiastical power together has been constantly the method of setting up a spiritual tyranny; that all persons ought to have liberty to worship God in the manner they think most agreeable to his word; and that the imposition of uniformity, and all compulsion in matters of religion, is antichristian.

The Presbyterians were as little acquainted with these principles of christian liberty as the Episcopalians had been before them; and used all their efforts to get the civil power entirely to themselves, and to establish their Articles of faith, and Directory for worship and discipline, to the suppression of all others. In this design there was no one who more opposed them than Mr. Dell. Being chaplain to the Army, and attending Sir Thomas Fairfax at the head quarters, he had many opportunities to counteract their plea. He was also, it appears, very intimate with Oliver Cromwell*, and many leading men in the Army, whose interest it was to check the power and curb the spirit of these rigid supporters of Uniformity. (*One of his printed Sermons, entitled, *The Crucified Christian*, was first delivered at Cromwell's house.) The celebrated Richard Baxter went for a time into the Army to counterwork Mr. Dell, Mr. Saltmarsh, and some other popular preachers, whom he considered *sectaries*. It is said in the life of Mr. Baxter, that his most frequent and vehement disputes with them was about *liberty of conscience*, as they called it; that is, that the civil magistrate had nothing to do in matters of religion, by constraint or restraint, but every man might not only hold and believe, but preach and do in matters of religion what he pleased. (* Calamy's *Abridgement*, p. 90)

His Principles

These were certainly the principles for which Mr. Dell, as well as the Baptists in general, contended. Edwards, the virulent Presbyterian, in his *Gangraena*, mentions a sermon he preached June 7, 1646, in Marston church, near Oxford, from the seven last verses of the 54th chapter of Isaiah, which gave great offence to several persons present. They accordingly founded nine grievous charges against him on what he had advanced, and put copies of them into the hands of several members of both houses of Parliament. The first of these are, *There are no more of a church of God in a kingdom than there be of such as*

have the Spirit of God in that kingdom. Neither Old or New Testament do hold a whole nation to be a Church. _ +To vindicate himself against their aspersions, he printed his sermon, and appeals to several hundreds of persons who were present, who were ready to confute the falsehoods contained in their accusations.

By turning to vol. I. p. 187-188, the reader will perceive what was the spirit of the times on the subject of a toleration in religion. It may truly be said *there arose no small stir about that way*. Just at this juncture, Nov. 25, 1646, Mr. Christopher Love, (who afterwards beheaded on Tower Hill) and Mr. Dell were appointed to preach on a fast-day before the house of commons. Mr. Dell preached in the morning from *Hebrews 9:10. Until the time of reformation*. From this he took the liberty of defending very freely the subject of christian liberty. He shewed what was true gospel reformation; into whose hands the work was committed; by what means it was to be accomplished; and the advantages of such a reformation where it is wrought. Under the last head, by many excellent arguments, he exposed the unreasonableness and evil of *persecution*; or of using external force and compulsion in matters purely religious.

Preaches before the Parliament

Mr. Love in the afternoon very warmly opposed those sentiments; endeavoured to justify the punishing of *hereticks* and *schismatics*; and to vindicate the authority of the civil magistrate in imposing articles of faith and a form of worship. The fame of this contest spread itself through the nation; but parliament thought it prudent as things then stood, to withhold their approbation of either of these discourses, and the usual ceremony of ordering them to be printed was dispensed with. Mr. Dell, however, afterwards published his sermon, with remarks upon Mr. Love's contradictions. To this Mr. Love replied in some *Animadversions*, and thus they became the two heads and champions of these opposing parties.

After what has been stated, it will not be matter from wonder that Dr. Calamy should speak disrespectfully of this great man, who contributed more perhaps than any other, to prevent those excesses of cruelty into which the Presbyterian sentiments of Uniformity would have driven the government.

The Doctor calls him a very unsettled man, and says he was challenged with three contradictions in his life, 1. For being professedly against *Paedobaptism*, and yet had his own children baptized. 2. For preaching against *Universities*, when yet he held the *headship* of a college. 3. For being against *tithes*, and yet taking 200 pounds per annum for his living at Yeldon.

Mr. Baxter's Opinion of him

From these charges Crosby attempts to vindicate him, but does not deny their truth. Mr. Job Orton, in Palmer's second edition of the *Nonconformists' Memorial*, ventures to question the truth of the whole account given of Mr. Dell by Crosby. The sole ground of his suspicion rests upon Mr. Baxter's assertion respecting Mr. Dell, _Who, I

think, (says he) neither understood himself, nor was understood by others, any further than to be one who took reason, sound doctrine, order and concord to be intolerable maladies of church and state, because they were the greatest strangers to his mind._

Such a charge from Mr. Baxter, who was a great enemy to those who pleaded for *liberty of conscience* and opposed *Infant Baptism*, is perfectly intelligible. *Joseph's brethren envied him, and could not speak peaceably unto him*; but it does not follow that Joseph gave them any occasion for their unkind speeches.

Crosby in summing up the character of Mr. Dell, says _It must be granted that he was somewhat tinctured with the enthusiasm that prevailed in those times; but was however a man of substantial learning, of real piety, and a noble defender of the rights and liberties of conscience. *Crosby, vol. I. p. 223, 224

Opposes Water Baptism

Mr. Palmer also mentions as the opinion of an Antipaedobaptist correspondent, that Mr. Dell should rather be ranked among the Quakers than the Baptists. It is certain that his sentiments on the subject of Baptism accorded with those of the _Friends,_ and his book entitled the _Doctrine of Baptisms,_ is held in repute by them, and is still printed and circulated in their Societies. It does not appear at what period he altered his sentiments on baptism, but if it be recollected that George Fox, the first of the Quakers, did not promulgate his sentiments till about the year 1647, it is abundantly more likely that he derived his principles on this subject from Mr. Dell. This supposition is confirmed by Mr. Dell's stating in his piece on baptism, that _it grieved him much to dissent from many worthy and gracious men that had been and were otherwise minded._ And amongst some objections which he introduces as made to his notion, that water baptism was superseded by the baptism of the Holy Ghost, one is, _But you are the first man for aught we know who ever opposed it,_ i.e. water baptism. Now if George Fox had propagated this principle previously to Mr. Dell's writing on the subject, there would have been no propriety in his being considered the first person who broached the opinion. His select works were published in an octavo edition by the Quakers in 1773. From a short advertisement prefixed, we make the following extract; _Though the transactions of his life are in a great measure unknown to us, his writings are a monument to his praise, which shew the good understanding he had received in the weighty concerns of life and salvation._ We have no account of the sphere of his labours after he was ejected in 1662, nor of the time of his death.*

- Works. 1. Christ's Spirit a Christian's Strength, or a plain discovery of the mighty and invincible power that all believers receive through the gift of the Spirit. First held forth in two Sermons on Acts 1:8; and afterward published for the instruction and use of those that are spiritual. Anno 1645. Dedicated to the Honourable the Lady Elizabeth Countess of Bolingbrook. 2. Uniformity examined, whether it be found in the gospel or in the practice of the Churches of Christ. 3. The Building, Beauty, Teaching, and Embellishment of the truly christian and spiritual Church. Isa. 54:11 _end. 4. Right Reformation; or the Reformation of the Church of the New Testament, &c. A Sermon

preached before the house of Commons, Wednesday Nov. 25, 1646.5. The Way of true peace and Unity in the Church of Christ. Dedicated to the Parliament, to his Excellency Lord General Fairfax, to the right honourable Lord General Cromwell, and the Council of War.6. The Crucified Christian, founded on *Gal. 2:19, 20*.7. The Stumbling Stone, &c.8. The Doctrine of Baptisms reduced from its antient and modern corruptions, and restored to its primitive soundness and integrity.9. The trial of Spirits both in Teachers and Hearers, wherein is held forth the clear discovery and certain downfall of the carnal and antichristian Clergy of these nations. Delivered at the university Congregation, Cambridge. 1653.10. Power from on high; or the Power of the Holy Ghost dispersed through the whole body of Christ, and communicated to each member. Two Sermons. Quarto. 1645.

In a work entitled *‘The Mystery of Anabaptism unmasked,’* published in London, 1706, by Marius D. Assigney, B.D. mention is made of Nathan Alcock, *a farmer of Bedfordshire*, as a *‘leader of this Sect.’* We know nothing of him or the place of his residence.

VOLUME II.

Berkshire

WE have already noticed some circumstances connected with the history of the Baptists in this county, in relating the events of the year 1660. The goal at Reading was at that period the residence of some excellent men, who like Paul and Silas when in prison, *‘prayed and sung praises unto God.’* Two of the persons who signed a letter printed in vol. I, p. 280 viz. Robert Keate and Richard Steed, were ministers, but whether the rest were so, we have not been able to ascertain.

Church at Abingdon

It is supposed that the Baptists were greatly persecuted in Berkshire during the reigns of Charles II and James II. Some circumstances of this nature, which transpired at Abingdon in 1686, are mentioned vol. I p. 461 and others will be related in the short account we have to give of the following ministers:

JOHN PENDARVIS, *Abingdon* RICHARD STEED, *Farringdon*

HENRY FORTY---- WILLIAM MILLS,-----

JOHN TOMKINS---- ROBERT KEATE, *Wantage*

WILLIAM FACEY, *Reading* JOHN MAN, *Longworth*

JOSEPH WARD,---- EDW. STENNETT, *Wallingford*

John Pendarvis, B.A. This gentleman was probably the founder of the church at Abingdon, and is mentioned by Anthony Wood, in his *History of Oxford writers*, p. 127, with all the bitterness which distinguishes that virulent author, when speaking of the Nonconformist ministers. He appears to have been born in the West of England, about the year 1622. In his youth he belonged to Exeter College, Oxford, to which he was admitted December 11, 1637, when fifteen years of age. Enjoying the advantages of a good tutor, he became, (says Woods) a tolerable disputant. In 1641, he took the degree of B.A. and completed it by determination. On leaving the college in 1642, he seems to have been a lecturer at Wantage. Being zealous for the spread of the gospel, he was not confined to this sphere of action, but became an itinerant preacher, and _went up and down unsent for preaching in houses, under trees hedges, &c. _His popularity must have been great, as Wood says, _he got a numerous multitude of disciples._

Dispute at Watlington

It is not known when he first embraced the principles of the Baptists, but in the year 1652 he was pastor of the church at Abingdon. His success and celebrity appears to have provoked the Rev. Jasper Mayne, DD of Christ Church, Oxford, who resided at Pyrton, near Wallington. Wood says, _there were present an innumerable company of people on each side, but through the scum of the people, and the party of Anabaptists, who backed Pendarvis, behaving themselves insolently, the dispute came to their own advantage, but that he had not seen it.

Wood further says that he died in London, September, 1656, and gives the following curious account of his funeral. _His body thereupon being embowelled, and wrapt up in sear-cloth by the care of the brethren, and afterwards preparations made for his funeral, the body was some weeks after conveyed to Abingdon; where being lodged at a grocer_s house on a Saturday, there was praying and preaching by the Anabaptists in the said house on Sunday, Monday, and Tuesday, not without reflections on the government by Oliver, and endeavours to raise mutinies. About three o_clock in the afternoon of Tuesday the 30th of September, the next day after that of St. Michael, his body was conducted from the said house by the brethren to a little garden-ground, then lately purchased as a burial place for the Anabaptists, situate in Ox-street, at the west end of the town, where it was with great lamentation by them deposited. At the same time was such a great party of the faction present, that Oliver being suspicious of some evil which might arise, sent Major General John Bridges with eight troops of horse to Wallingford. Many of those soldiers were in and near Abingdon during the time of praying, preaching, and burying. After the burial were tumults raised by preaching, which would have ended in blows, had not the soldiers intercepted and sent them home._

Funeral of Mr. Pendarvis

Mr. Pendarvis died when about thirty-four years of age, and notwithstanding the caricature representation of this high-church writer, appears to have been a person of

great respectability, talents and usefulness, whose death was considered a cause of great affliction by the church. *Devout men carried him to his burial, and made great lamentation over him.**

**Works.* 1. Arrow against Babylon: or Queries serving to a clear discovery of the Mystery of Iniquity. London, 1656. Quarto. This was answered by William Ley, minister of Wantage, Christopher Fowler of Reading and John Tickell of Abingdon. 2. Endeavours for reformation in Saints apparel. 3. Queries for the people called Quakers. 4. Prefatory Epistle to a book entitled The Prophet Malachi and Isaiah prophesying to the Saints and Professors of this generation, London, 1656. Quarto. 5. Several Sermons and other Theological Tracts, London, 1657. Quarto. 6. Disputes at Watlington.

Preface to Sighs for Sion

In the year of his death, Mr. Pendarvis was united with some other baptist ministers, in the west of England, in publishing an address to the churches over which they were overseers. This is a quarto pamphlet of twenty-two pages, printed in London, 1656, and entitled: *Sighs for Sion: or Faith and Love constraining some grievings in her sorrow, and groanings for her deliverance: By a few of her weak and unworthy children. Humbly and in all faithfulness presented to those assemblies of hers where Grace has set them as Watchmen: and unto any others who in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord both theirs and ours.* In way of Essay, To blow the trumpet in Zion, and sound an alarm in God's holy mountain. *To the awakening them that are at ease, and pressing and encouraging all the upright in heart, to be in pain with her, in this day of sore travail, and sore expectation.* We copy the preface because it will serve as *data* to other parts of our work.

__To the several Congregations respectively, to which we stand especially related; viz. In Plymouth, Abingdon, Totness, Bovey-Tracy, and Dartmouth.__

__Dearly beloved,

We know and acknowledge ourselves to be debtors (yea we owe our ownelves) to the Lord and you, for the exceeding grace that we (though most unworthy) have found in his sight, counting us faithful and putting us into the ministry of his gospel; and for that our service amongst you hath been, and is in any measure accepted. Under the sense of which engagement, it is the least we can do to be ready to render an account of ourselves from time to time unto you; the which we now the more cheerfully undertake, as being under the persuasion of a call from the Lord, leading us forth thereunto, and having good hopes, through grace, that our labour shall not be in vain; in and through whom we are Yours, faithfully labouring (though in much weakness) for our soul's prosperity, as those whose joy and rejoicing, both here and in the day of Christ, waits to be fulfilled therein.__

Abraham Cheare

John Pendarvis

Henry Forty

Tho. Glasse

Robert Steede

Henry Forty

We have no information of any person immediately succeeding Mr. Pendarvis at Abingdon. It is likely the church was much scattered through the persecution that followed the restoration of the king, 1660.

Henry Forty. He settled here in 1675, and continued till his death in 1692. Mr. Forty was pastor of a church in the West of England in 1656, when he signed the Preface to *Sighs for Sion*. It is probable he had been before this settled in London, as his name appears to an Edition of the Confession of the seven churches in 1651. He was a member of Mr. Jessey's church, and perhaps assisted him while he was Rector of St. George's parish. After the restoration he was a great sufferer for his nonconformity, as he lay twelve years in Exeter goal. On being liberated from his long confinement, he returned to London, and became the successor of his former pastor. Crosby says, that this church divided on account of a difference on the subject of mixed communion, and that the baptists who objected to unbaptized persons coming to the Lord's Table chose Mr. Forty. A circumstance in the Bedford records corroborates this statement. A letter was sent in 1674 from the church *of which Mr. Jessey had been pastor,* to the church at Bedford, requesting the dismissal of a member. This was signed by Mr. Forty, and in reply the church at Bedford request to be informed, *whether they still admitted the principle of holding communion with saints as saints, though differing in principle about water baptism.* The reason they assign for asking this question is, that *when a christian sister asked brother Forty whether he would advise her to fall into communion with their congregation, that he answered, By no means, because they maintained this principle.* We know (say they) that some of your members are with us in this matter, but we wish to know if it is a church principle, and whether your pastors and elders hold and maintain it. From this it is evident that if a separation took place, the major part had opposed the principle of mixed communion, on which the church was founded by Mr. Jessey after his becoming a baptist. Mr. Forty's name appears this year to the decision of the London ministers on the Quaker's appeal, respecting Thomas Hicks; and in the next year to the reply given to Mr. Obed Wills of Bristol, On his appeal respecting Mr. Danver's History of Baptism, and to the letter sent to Mr. Gifford, Vol. I, p. 417. Soon after Mr. Forty went to reside at Abingdon, and was the pastor at the time of the curious trial at the Assizes mentioned Vol. I, p. 461. He attended the general Assembly in 1689. In 1692 he finished his course in the 67th year of his age. His funeral sermon was preached by Mr. Benjamin Keach, and printed with an Elegy on his death, entitled, *The everlasting covenant.*

Imprisoned twelve years.

Crosby says, *He was a man of great piety, one who long and faithfully served Jesus Christ under many afflictions, great trials, and sufferings. He was an instrument in*

God's hand for the conversion of his own father and mother, and many others. He lay twelve years in the prison at Exeter, for the testimony of a good conscience, lived an unspotted life, and died at Abingdon.

As Mr. Forty was imprisoned at Exeter, it is likely he left London after 1651, and settled in Devonshire, where we find him signing the letter, entitled, *“Sighs for Sion, &c.”* in 1656. It is probable he was confined immediately after the restoration of the king, with Abraham Cheare and others of his brethren, and was liberated about the time Bunyan procured his release.

Church at Reading.

John Tomkins. He was an assistant to Mr. Forty, and his name is signed to the proceedings of the General Assembly in 1689 and 1692. He is called the minister of the Church at both these periods, and was afterwards its pastor. He suffered in the cause of his divine Master, and endured hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. A large chest in which he used to hide himself from his persecutors, is still preserved by some of his descendants, who are at present respectable members of the same Church, now under the care of Mr. J. Evans. A Mr. Philip Hockton was a *Messenger* from this Church in 1689, but it is not known that he was a minister.

William Facey. He was pastor of the Church at Reading in 1689, and his name appears to the several resolutions of the Assembly in that year. He had been a sufferer for the cause of Nonconformity in Dorchester jail, and it is supposed died before the year 1692, as he was not present at the General Assembly. He was the Author of a system of shorthand known by his name. He was, it is probable, succeeded by Mr. Joseph Ward, of whom we have no account; nor of a Mr. Ryamire Griffin who was a *Messenger* to the Assembly in 1689.

We have been informed by Mr. John Holloway, now of Bristol, for several years the pastor of the church at Reading, that the members were at one period greatly persecuted. They used to meet for worship in Pignie's Lane on the banks of a branch of the river Kennett. From the back door of the house where they assembled they threw a bridge across the stream; that when interrupted by the informers they might make their escape. He observes also that it is said, the celebrated John Bunyan was very intimate with the people at Reading, and that he has been known to pass through the Town habited as a Carter, with a long whip in his hand, to avoid detection. This may probably account for his visit to Reading mentioned in his Life. In returning from hence he contracted the cold which terminated his useful course. At one period Mr. Benjamin Keach used to ride from London to Reading, to administer the ordinance of the Lord's Supper to the baptist church there; but whether this was before or after the death of Mr. Facey cannot be ascertained.

Farringdon and Wantage

Richard Steed. He was minister of the church at Farringdon at the time of the general Assembly, both in 1689 and 1692. It is probable he may have been the founder of this church before the Restoration, after which he suffered imprisonment in Reading jail. The present Meeting-house at Farringdon stands on the same site with that occupied by Mr. Steed.

William Mills. He was united with Mr. Steed at Farringdon, and attended the Assembly with him. This is all we know of him; except he were the person of this name mentioned by Palmer, as ejected from a living in Somersetshire.

Robert Keate. He has been mentioned among the sufferers in Reading jail in 1660. He was, it is likely, the founder of the baptist church at Wantage. He was the minister there in 1689, and his name always appearing among the signatures to their transactions, and being one of the committee appointed to decide between the disputants on the subject of singing in public worship, it should seem he was a person of respectability and eminence.

John Man. We find his name signed to the Declaration made by the Baptists against Venner's Rebellion in 1661. From this it is probable he was a minister in London. There was a person of this name who signed the Midland Baptist Association letter in 1655, as the minister of Chipping-Campden in Gloucestershire; it is probable he was the same person. At the period of the General Assembly he was minister of the church at *Longworth*, in this county, and it appears he had been active in publishing on the subject of singing, which we apprehend he approved. Mr. Peter Stephens attended as a messenger from this church to the Assembly, with Mr. Man, in 1689. *(*Rippon's Register*, January, 1799 p 13)

Mr. Edward Stennett.

Edward Stennett. He was pastor of a sabbatarian baptist church at Wallingford, in 1686, how much earlier we have not been able to ascertain. From the church book of the celebrated Francis Bamfield of London, we learn that when that church was collected again after being scattered on account of his sufferings, they were anxious to get a minister of the sabbatarian sentiments, and resolved to request Mr. Edward Stennett, pastor of a church at Wallingford, to come occasionally to assist them. Coming accidentally to London, they wished him to administer the ordinance of the Lord's supper to them, with which he complied. They afterwards sent a letter to him and the church at Wallingford, desiring that he would assist them occasionally, which he continued to do till the ordination of his son Joseph over them, March 4, 1690. A member was dismissed to the church at Pinner's hall, from that at Wallingford, under the care of Mr. Stennett, 10th month, 1691. *He died at Wallingford. (*Old Church Book in possession of the Rev. Robert Burnside.)

His wife was Mrs. Mary Quelch, whose parents were of good repute in the city of Oxford. They were (it is said) both pious and worthy persons, and justly deserved the character given them in the epitaph inscribed on the tomb erected for them. This was written by their son Joseph, and is as follows;

_Here lies holy and an happy pair;

As once in grace, they now in glory share:

They dared to suffer, but they feared to sin:

And meekly bore the cross, the crown to win:

So lived, as not to lie afraid to die;

So died, as heirs of immortality.

Reader, attend: though dead, they speak to thee:

Tread the same path, the same thine end shall be._+

(+ This is inserted in the printed poems of Mr. Joseph Stennett)

It appears from this Epitaph that Mr. and Mrs. Stennett had been sufferers in the cause of Christ. The following account of Mr. Edward Stennett, extracted from the life of his son Joseph, prefixed to his works, is so worthy of preservation, that we dare not omit it.

His Difficulties

_The part Mr. Edward Stennett took in the civil wars, being on the side of the parliament, exposed him to the neglect of his relations: and afterwards too many difficulties. He was a faithful and laborious minister: but his dissent from the established church depriving him of the means whereby to maintain his family, which was large, he applied himself to the study of physic; by the practice of which he was enabled to bring up his children, and to give them a good education, notwithstanding he bore a considerable share of the persecutions which the Dissenters underwent at that time. While I speak of his suffering, it may not be amiss to preserve an account of one very extraordinary deliverance he met with, and which I have heard his son relate in the following manner, _He dwelt in the castle at Wallingford, a place where no warrant could make forcible entrance, but that of a Lord Chief Justice,; and the house is so situated, that assemblies could meet, and every part of religious worship be exercised in it, without any danger of a legal conviction, unless informers were admitted, which care was taken to prevent; so that for a long time he kept a constant and undisturbed meeting in his hall. A gentleman who was in the commission of the peace, and his very near neighbour, being highly incensed at an assembly of this kind so near him, after having made several

fruitless attempts to get his emissaries admitted into the house in order to a conviction, in the rage of disappointment resolved, together with a neighbouring clergyman, to do it by subornation of witnesses. They accordingly hired some persons fit for their purpose, to swear they had been at those assemblies, and heard prayer and preaching there, though they had never been in the house on those occasions. The clergyman's conduct in this affair was the more censured, because he had professed a great esteem for Mr. Stennett, and was under considerable obligations to him, having often had his assistance in the way of his profession, as a physician, for his family, without any reward.

His Deliverance

Mr. Stennett finding an indictment was laid against him on the Conventicle Act, founded upon the oaths of several witnesses, and being well assured that nothing but perjury could support it, was resolved to traverse it, and accordingly did so. The assizes were held at Newbury; and when the time drew near, there was great triumph in the success these gentlemen proposed to themselves; when on a sudden the scene was changed; news came to the Justice that his son, whom he had lately placed at Oxford, was gone off with a player: the concern whereof, and the riding in search of him, prevented his attendance in the court. The clergyman, a few days before the assizes, boasted much of the service which would be done to the church and the neighbourhood by this prosecution, and of his own determination to be at Newbury to carry it on: but to the surprize of many, his design was frustrated by sudden death! One of the witnesses, who lived at Cromish, was so prevented by being seized with a violent and sad disease, of which he died. Another of them fell down and broke his leg, and so was hindered. In short, of seven or eight persons engaged in this wicked design, there was but one left who was capable of appearing: he was a gardener, who had been frequently employed by Mr. Stennett as day labourer, but never lodged in his house, nor was admitted to the religious assemblies held there. They thought to make him as he was a servant to the family, a very material evidence; and kept him in liquor for several days to that purpose. But coming to his reason just as the assizes drew on, he went about the town exclaiming against himself for his ingratitude and perjury, as well as against those who had employed him; and absolutely refused to go. So that when Mr. Stennett came to Newbury, neither prosecutor nor witness appearing against him, he was dismissed of course!_ *

**Life of Mr. Joseph Stennett, p6*

His Descendants

Mr. Edward Stennett had several sons and one daughter, besides those who died young. His eldest son, Jehudah, afterwards an eminent physician at Henley upon Thames, wrote an Hebrew Grammar at nineteen years of age, which was printed, and well received by the public. Another of his sons, Benjamin, proved a valuable and useful minister; but died young. His daughter, chiefly by the instructions of her brother Joseph, acquired such skill in the Greek and Hebrew languages, as to consult the scriptures in their originals with ease and pleasure. She was an excellent woman, and married to a worthy gentleman, Mr. William Morton, of Knaphill, in the county of Bucks.

By the records above referred to, we find that Mr. Jehudah Stennett resided in London in the year 1686, and was one of the members of the church at Pinner's Hall,

when they were re-collected. Mr. Joseph Stennett joined it soon afterwards in the same year. Of this celebrated man we shall speak in another place.

After the death of Mr. Stennett, his people were almost constantly supplied by Mr. Richard Comyns, MA who was ejected from Cholsely in 1662, a village about three miles from Wallingford. It is not likely he was a Baptist, as it is said he never administered the Lord's supper at Wallingford, but at Cholsely, to some of his Ante-Bartholomean hearers, a few of the Wallingford people communicating with them. At his death it is probable the Sabbatarian Baptist Church became extinct.

Buckinghamshire

THE consequences of the persecuting penal statutes made against the Non-conformists, after the restoration, were peculiarly felt in this County. Here were found Justices of the Peace and different Magistrates, who took pleasure in rigorously enforcing the penalties enacted by the Conventicle and other Acts; granting Informers a third part of the fine, to be levied at the discretion of the Justices, half on the house and land where such assembly was held, and half for a pretended and perhaps unknown preacher. Also, to lay a certain sum for those who were poor and could not pay, on those present, who in the opinion of the Justices were able to do so.

Persecution in Buckinghamshire

It is affecting to think that some of the bishops and clergy of all ranks were zealous in the cause of persecution. They were charged with encouraging persons to become informers and even preferring to ecclesiastical offices such as they thought would be most active in prosecuting the laws against Dissenters.

These measure were adopted generally throughout the kingdom; but the storm did not fall so heavily on some parts as on others; because suitable agents could not be found in every place. If the reader will turn to Vol. I, p 361, and observe the account of the persecution at Bedford in 1670, these remarks will appear to be founded in truth.

Elwood, one of the people called Quakers, says, _In some parts of the country care had been timely taken by some (not of the lowest rank) to choose some particular persons, men of sharp wit, close countenances, pliant tempers, and deep dissimulation. These were sent out among the Sectaries, as they were called, with instructions to conform to all sorts of religious professions, and to obtrude themselves into all religious societies. The design was that by these means, a full account of the number of dissenting places might be obtained; what number of persons frequented them and of what rank; who of them were persons of property, and where they resided; that they may be able to decide where to cast their net to the best advantage._

Singular Providence

The person sent into Buckinghamshire assumed the character of a *Quaker*; but being suspected by the first person he applied to, and refused any entertainment, he went to an inn, when being intoxicated with liquor, he told what he was, and said that he was

sent by *Dr. Mew*, Vice-chancellor of Oxford, and produced a warrant under the hand and seal of a Justice named *Morton*, as his authority and protection.

Finding when he recovered from his intoxication that he was discovered, he went across the country, and mixed with the *Baptists*. Through the credulity of some persons he obtained knowledge of a meeting which they held in a private place. Craftily insinuating himself into their favour he drew some of them into free conversation, who incautiously spoke of the severity of the times. The villain having obtained his purpose, laid an information against a Mr. Headach, a man of good reputation, for having spoken *treasonable words*, with the design doubtless of robbing him of his estate, or perhaps of his life. But at the very time this good man stood at the bar to be arraigned upon this false accusation, some wretched practices were brought to light against the Informer, which together with the guilt of his conscience, led him to leave the court and the country.

The country people not knowing the name of this person or of another who assisted him, called him the *Trepan*, and his companion the *Informer*; though they afterward discovered the name of the first to be *John Poulter*, a notoriously wicked fellow, the son of a butcher at Salisbury; and the other to be one Lacey of Risborough. To prove his contempt of infant baptism *Poulter* had christened a cat, and in derision to the queen named it Catherine-Catherina. *

This sketch of the difficulties the dissenters were exposed to in attending divine worship, may give us a tolerable idea of the sufferings at this period, during upwards of fifteen years. We proceed to give what little account we have of the baptist ministers and churches.

Ministers in Buckinghamshire.

The ministers of whom we have heard in Buckinghamshire, are the following; -

JOHN RUSSEL

STEPHEN DAGNELL, *Ailsbury*

-----ELLIT,-----

PETER TYLER, *Haddington*

ROBERT KNIGHT, *Stukely*

JOHN GIBBS, *Newport Pagnell*

PAUL HOBSON, *Eton College*.

John Russel. We have no information where the church was situated of which he was the pastor. He had the honour of baptizing Mr. Benjamin Keach, as is mentioned in the life of that useful minister. From what is said by Crosby of the early sentiments of Mr. Keach, we conclude that Mr. Russel was a General Baptist. It is not improbable but what Dr. William Russel of London, who is mentioned vol 1 p 555, as taking a principal part in the Portsmouth disputation, was his son.

(* *History of the life of Thomas Elwood, written by his own hand, London, 1714p 259*)

Haddington and Stukely

Stephen Dagnell. He was the pastor of the church at Ailsbury in 1664. It should seem that he had been a minister there for many years. He is mentioned by Edwards in the

year 1646. He says, _In Buckinghamshire there are many notorious Sectaries, as at Ailsbury one *Dagnell*, a Bookseller, a map of errors, who to a godly minister denied original sin, and maintained many other wicked opinions._ *

He was greatly persecuted and suffered much for his principles. But neither imprisonment, confiscation of goods, nor even the prospect of a violent death, could shake his integrity. For an account of this shameful and unprecedented trial, when a Justice of the Peace passed sentence of death upon Protestants for not conforming to the established church, we refer our readers to vol. I, p 335-338. The good providence of God in procuring him the king's pardon, through the application of Mr. William Kiffin to Chancellor Hyde, must have made an indelible impression on his mind; and have led him with greater zeal to devote himself to the cause of Christ. We have no account of the period of his death.

Ellit. Crosby calls him _teacher of the church at Ailsbury; but says nothing further of him, excepting that he was a partaker with Mr. Dagnell in the prosecution to which we have referred.

Peter Tyler. He was the Messenger from the church at *Haddington* to the general Assemblies in London, in 1689 and 1692.

Robert Knight. As the pastor of the church at Stukely, he is mentioned in the letters of the General Assemblies. The two last churches being the only ones that attended these Assemblies in this county, it is probable the rest were such as admitted to mixt communion, or were of the General Baptist denomination.

Newport Pagnell

John Gibbs. In the Nonconformist Memorial it is said of this person, vol. 1 p 808, _He was ejected some months before the Bartholomew act for refusing to admit the whole parish to the Lord's Table. He was many years afterwards pastor to a dissenting congregation in this town, where he lived to be very old, and was much esteemed._ Strictly speaking therefore, though an ejected minister, yet he was not ejected by the Act of Uniformity. It is supposed that this event happened at the close of the year 1659, as his successor was inducted into the living the 24th of March 1660. Amongst those to whom Mr. Gibbs refused this solemn ordinance was a notorious drunkard, who being a man of considerable property and influence, was the principal occasion of his ejection. For this information we are indebted, since the publication of our first Volume, to a *Brief Narrative of the Rise and Progress of the Independent Church at Newport Pagnell*; by the Rev. Thomas Palmer Bull, one of the present pastors of the Church. This narrative relates, that _at the time of his ejection, Mr. Gibbs was possessed of an estate consisting of two houses, which stood on the spot where the house now belonging to the Rev. Mr. Bull was afterwards erected. One of these houses fronted the street, and was occupied by Mr. Gibbs. Adjoining to his premises was a large barn, which tradition informs us, had previously been occupied as a Quaker's meeting.

Persecution of Mr. Gibbs

When this good man was excluded from his pulpit in the church, he retreated, with a considerable part of his congregation, to this building, and administered to them the word

of life. In the persecuting times which followed upon Mr. Gibbs's ejection, the barn was found to be in a very convenient situation for the purpose to which it was devoted, being at the further end from the street, in a long yard: persons who were upon the watch could easily ascertain the entrance of informers, and give notice to the congregation, who had an opportunity of making their escape through a door which opened into a bye-lane that connected Marsh-end with the High Street, and passed through what is now Mr. Bull's garden. This zealous and indefatigable preacher was much exposed to the malice of a persecuting generation. He endured much personal abuse, and was committed to prison for his adherence to the principles of Nonconformity. Nothing, however, could shake his resolution, nor destroy his confidence in God. He continued his work throughout the whole period of the reigns of the wicked monarchs, Charles II and James II and survived the glorious revolution upwards of ten years.

Mr. Gibbs, according to the testimony of his adversaries, was a learned man, and had been educated at one of the Universities. Richard Carpenter who had a public dispute with him on the subject of Infant baptism in the church at Newport Pagnell, thus describes him: "This heady enthusiast, being now in his own head, the head of the Universe, was insooth sometimes a member of the University (for the which he did evaporate his grief, and cry out the pangs of his inward remorsement before the country) and had been somewhat vexatious to the Protestant ministers in the circle about him."

Disputes with Carpenter

His friends and allies fixed all their eyes, with all their lies upon him as the *Carry Castle*, or *Behemoth* of the county. Crosby notices this public dispute referred to as one of those public disputations held between the Baptists and Paedobaptists on the subject of baptism. He says, "Another was held about the year 1647, in the parish church of Newport Pagnell, before a great assembly of ministers and other between Mr. Gibbs and Mr. Richard Carpenter. As Carpenter defended the principles of the Paedobaptists, it is certain that Mr. Gibbs must have taken the side of the Baptists. Carpenter published his arguments, if such they may be called, and entitled his work, *The Anabaptist washt and washt, and shrunk in the washing: Or a scholastic Discussion of the much agitated Controversies concerning Infant Baptism; Occasioned by a Publike Disputation, before a great Assembly of Ministers, and other persons of worth, in the church of Newport Pagnell*. Betwixt Mr. Gibbs minister there, and the author, Richard Carpenter, Independent. Wherein also the author occasionally declares his judgement concerning the Papists, and afterwards concerning Episcopacy. London, printed by William Hunt.

This book, which contains 469 duodecimo pages, is dedicated "To all the zealous Defenders and Abettors of Infant Baptism." In it the writer refers to Dr. Featly's *Dipper Dipt*, as being recently published; and also to the alteration which was made by the Assembly of Divines in the manner of baptizing. This was in 1646. See Vol I, p 163. Referring to this, Carpenter says, p 361, "Some noise it, that when the Presbyterian had pared, rounded, and brought the baptizing of Infants from the settled and immoveable Font, to the moveable and unsettled *Pue-Dish*; the Anabaptist did wring it out of his hands, and move it quite away."

Proofs that he was a Baptist

Yea, one thought in a dream, that he saw the *Presbyterian* come dauncing in a Mask, with his *Pue-Dish* in his hands; and our *Gib-Anabaptist* dauncing to him, grappling with him, pulling it from him, and furiously dashing it against the ground._

This is a specimen of the manner in which Carpenter treats his opponent, whom he evidently considered a violent opposer of Infant sprinkling. Speaking of his having _baptized a child, after preaching in the church of Newport Pagnell before a very numerous auditory, congealed and consisting of the more solid and sapid part of town and country:_he adds, _In the sober performance of which *mysterious work*, the minister unsettled in place, and (it seems) in person, *professing for Anabaptism*, and suddenly rapt into a vertiginous motion, interrupted me. And presently summoned me by a challenge in the face of the congregation to give him and his brethren of *the Separation* a meeting there in publick; after his twelve days preparation *Parasceve* to his intended victory._*

- *To give our reader an idea of Mr. Carpenter's style we present him with the following extract. Speaking of Anabaptism, he say, _It is not exempted from sacred mysteries that these are set and sorted together as unclean creatures, or Creatures. *Lev. 11:17 the little Owl, and the Cormorant, and the great owl.* The little Owl resembles the unbaptized child: the great Owl is the Anabaptist Parent, and *Corvus Marinus*, the Cormorant betwixt them is the wide-throated preacher, that hath divided the child from the Parent, dives into them, and swallows their souls. *Anabap. Washt, &c.* p 384.

Bedford Records

From these proofs we concluded that Mr. Gibbs was a Baptist; not only opposing the sprinkling of Infants, but contending for the baptism of believers. In reference to this part of his sentiments Mr. Thomas Bull has given the following statement. _In the Bedford church book, the name of Mr. Gibbs frequently occurs, and he is termed a Catabaptist, from the circumstance of his supposing with some others at the time in which he lived, that the ordinance of Baptism was only to be administered to converted Jews or Pagans._

The only proof of Mr. Gibbs being a Catabaptist is his being called so in the Bedford church book. It is true that he is often mentioned in this book, which we have consulted in every page, but he is not *frequently* called a Catabaptist, nor at all in those records which relate to him. There is a remark of this kind, but it is in the hand-writing of the late Mr. Joshua Symonds, a pastor of the church.

There is no doubt but Mr. Symonds had heard this of him but had he been of this opinion, Carpenter would not have charged him with *re-baptizing*, but with opposing the ordinance of baptism altogether: except when Jews and Pagans were converted.

Our readers must decide whether there was sufficient evidence for Mr. Bull to conclude that Mr. Gibbs was a Catabaptist, and for calling the church of which he was the pastor an *independent* church. This work it will be perceived is supplied in the defaced Inscription on the Tomb, and we have no doubt but it should have been instead of an *Independent*, a *Congregational*: being as we suppose founded on the principle of the

church at Bedford, of whose ministers, though we know all of them, till after the death of Bunyan, were Baptists, the records take no notice of their being so, nor of any of its members being baptized.

It might be said that there was a *baptist* church in the town at the same time, and that Mr. Gibbs was on the most friendly terms with them. This is no proof of Mr. Gibbs being a Paedobaptist, as we know the Baptists who were for strict communion would not commune with a Congregational church composed of Baptists and Paedobaptists; nor would the church at Bedford hold fellowship with any baptist church that was not so constituted.

His Death and Elegy

From investigating this matter, we see no cause to alter our opinion of the sentiments of Mr. Gibbs; as being those of the Baptists in general respecting the *subjects* and *mode* of Baptism. At least that these were his sentiments, when he disputed with Carpenter in 1647; whatever they were afterwards.

Mr. Gibbs, whose ministry had been eminently useful at Newport, died June 16, 1699, at the age of 72. He was buried near the South door of the chancel, where a tomb is erected to his memory, on which is a Latin inscription. Mr. Bull says _it is scarcely legible, the following however is nearly the substance of it._

This tomb is erected, equally from gratitude and affection,

Over the spot where are laid the sacred ashes of

The Reverend John Gibbs;

A man of a well cultivated mind, wonderful memory

Acute judgement, and great learning,

As well as eminent piety and great integrity:

A fervent preacher both to saints and sinners.

[Having been] Pastor of [an Independent] Church _years,

He willingly dismissed his spirit,

In the year of Christ, 1699,

And of his age 72.

Elegy of Mr. Gibbs

Since writing the above we have obtained a single sheet, printed at Newport Pagnell soon after the death of Mr. Gibbs, entitled, _An Elegy on the death of that famous minister of the gospel, Mr. John Gibbs, Pastor of the church of Christ in and about Newport-Pagnel, who departed this life on the 16th day of June, in the seventy-second year of his Age, 1699._This Elegy consists of ninety-six lines of very moderate merit, and an Acrostic.It proves however the high estimation in which he was held, and is very descriptive of his character, labours and sufferings.

_It was the flock and not the fleece, that he
Did seek to save and feed continually:
_Twas his delight, yea, and his chiefest joy
Their souls to feed and sin for to destroy,
In Persecutions he hath often stood
To seal the truths of Jesus with his blood:
In dangers great, and perils night and day
Was he engaged among the beasts of prey;
By wicked ones he often was misued,
His hair pulled off, his person much abused;
The bloody sword against him they did draw,
Thereby intending his life to destroy;
But great Jehovah with his mighty hand
Their violence and malice did withstand,
And did defend him from his throne on high,
And kept him as the apple of his eye;
To Prison and confinement he did go
With cheerful heart and countenance also;
With courage great he valiantly did stand,
To witness for his Lord with heart and hand;
Like to the Olive that is green and fair,
Yea like the Cedars which most comely are;
So did his branches and his graces shine,
With wisdom, fear, and holiness divine._

He published a Funeral Sermon for a Mr. Hartley, and a small piece entitled, _A Last Legacy to the Parishioners of Newport-Pagnel._

Baptists in Newport-Pagnel

In the time of Mr. Gibbs there were a number of Baptists in Newport Pagnel, and _there is reason to think (says Mr. Thompson) that this interest is of much longer standing than the Independents, but their records being all lost, there is no ascertaining particular facts.A venerable old man now living, [1774] one of Mr. Bull_s hearers, who constantly attended Mr. Gibbs preaching, says, _Mr. Gibbs loved these people and wished to have brought them into a regular church state, and took great pains for this purpose, but could not succeed._There was a Mr. Bennett among them, whom Mr. Gibbs was desirous of settling over them as Pastor._He was_ (says the old man) _a good preacher and of exemplary behaviour; but the people could not agree among themselves

about him. _Perhaps their sufferings had sowered their tempers like many others of the excellent of the Earth._ *

From this account it should seem that these must have been persons who had been baptized by Mr. Gibbs while he was minister of the Parish; but who disapproved of some things in the established presbyterian church, perhaps the promiscuous admission of the whole parish to the Lord_s Table, and therefore met in a separate Society. They may also have objected to unite in fellowship with unbaptized persons, when Mr. Gibbs, after the restoration, formed a congregational church, and therefore still remained a separate body. However it was, it is evident Mr. Gibbs was not offended with them for their conduct, but manifested his affection to them, and his desire to promote their welfare, notwithstanding his principles as a Baptist were not so strict.

*MSSvol 1

Baptists at Oulney

We know nothing further of Mr. Bennett, who was their minister, though never settled as their pastor. The reason assigned for this is not at all probable. *

The Baptist church at Oulney is of ancient standing. Its origin is thus related by Mr. Thompson. _Mr. Gibbs purchased a place for worship at Oulney, and preached there frequently, till he had raised an Interest. Some time during the reign of Charles II he gave the Meeting house to them. _It should seem that he continued preaching to them while he lived, as it is added, _At his death Mr. Morris, who afterwards removed to Rowel, settled as Pastor among them. He was an Independent, but the congregation admitted of mixed communion. On some occasion he removed from the old meeting, and with the Independents, laid the foundation of the Independent interest. _ +As a proof of the high estimation in which Mr. Gibbs was held at Oulney, it is mentioned in the old deeds of the Baptist meeting that _no person shall ever be chosen Pastor who shall differ in his religious sentiments from the Rev. John Gibbs of Newport. _++

*It must have been among these people that Mr. Paul Hobson was preaching when committed to prison at Newport Pagnell, in 1645. Vol I, p 172. Mr. Thompson says, it was by means of the Soldiers religion got footing in this Town.

+ MSS vol 1++ Mr. Bull_s Narrative p 6

Mr. Paul Hobson

Mr. Paul Hobson He is mentioned, vol I, p 329, among the ejected ministers. Dr. Calamy supposes that he was chaplain of Eaton College, and that he had a place of command in the army; but observes, that if he had conformed afterwards it would have made some atonement, in the case of other instances. In addition to these circumstances, we find that he was engaged as early as 1639, as one of the chief promoters of founding a baptist church in London. He was one of the pastors who signed the confession of faith of the seven churches in London in 1644. After this he went into the Parliament Army, where he arrived to the rank of Captain in 1645. We have mentioned, vol I, p 172, his being apprehended for preaching contrary to an Act of Parliament for silencing lay-

preachers, by the governor of Newport Pagnell. While in the Army we find him in the West of England, and it is probable he contributed to found the churches at Exeter, Plymouth, Dartmouth, &c. Edwards says in his *Gangraena*, 1645, that he preached every Wednesday in Checker Alley, Finsbury-fields, and it should seem that he was very popular, as this defaming writer acknowledges that _when he was in the Army, wherever he came he would preach publicly in the pulpits, and privately to the soldiers._ Mr. Robinson in his history of baptism mentions some shameful indecencies committed by his soldiers in St. Paul's church, in contempt of infant-baptism. Mr. Robinson gives as his authority a tract entitled *News from Powles in one Quarto Sheet*, in 1649. When it is considered how many defamatory tracts were published by all parties at that period, but little dependance can be placed upon this statement. Were it true, however, that his soldiers did the action attributed to them, it is not at all likely that their Captain should encourage it, or even be acquainted with it. Edwards says, _he printed a book of Sermons, and also a discourse against baptizing children, upon occasion of that disputation that should have been between Mr. Calamy and some of the Anabaptists._ He charged him with Antinomian sentiments, but as it should seem without sufficient evidence. We have no account of him after the period of his being ejected.

Confession of Faith

In concluding our account of this county we mention a circumstance related by Crosby, which proves that there were many baptist churches in it, though we have not been able to obtain more information respecting them.

This is as follows, _In the year 1678, a Confession of faith was agreed to, and signed by *fifty four ministers, and messengers*, of the several counties of Bucks, Hertford, Bedford, and Oxford; in behalf of themselves and many others; containing fifty Articles, which the Subscribers say they _did most heartily and unfeignedly own, believe, and profess, and desired through the grace of God to persevere in._ It was soon after published under the title of, *An Orthodox Creed; or a protestant Confession of faith; being an essay to unite and confirm all true protestants, in the fundamental articles of the Christian Religion against the errors and heresies of the church of Rome._*

The Confession is printed at large, in the Appendix to Crosby's third volume, Number 1. To this we refer those of our readers who wish to consult what may with propriety be called *a form of sound words*. This Creed is what is termed Calvisim, and all its parts are supported by a great variety of scripture references. The 28th Article is entitled, *_Of the right subject and administration of holy Baptism._** We give an extract for the gratification of our readers.

*Crosby, vol iii Appendix p 30

Baptist Confirmation

_Baptism is an ordinance of the New Testament, ordained by *Jesus Christ*, to be unto the party baptized, or dipped, a sign of our entrance into the Covenant of grace, and ingrafting into Christ, and into the body of Christ, which is his church; and of remission of sin in the blood of Christ, and of our fellowship with Christ, in his death and resurrection,

and of our living, or rising to newness of life. And orderly, none ought to be admitted into the visible church of Christ, without being first baptized; and those which do really profess repentance towards God, and faith in, and obedience to, our Lord Jesus Christ, are the only *proper subjects* of this ordinance, according to our Lord's holy institution and primitive practice; and ought by the minister, or administrator, to be done in a solemn manner, in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, by *immersion* or dipping of the person in the element of water; this being necessary to the due administration of this holy sacrament, as holy scripture sheweth, and the first and best antiquity witnesseth for some *centuries of years*.*

These churches held the principle of *laying on of hands* with prayer on baptized believers. The 32nd Article is thus expressed. _Prayer with the imposition of hands by the bishop or elder, on baptized believers, as such, for the reception of the holy promised Spirit of Christ, we believe is a principle of Christ's doctrine, and ought to be practiced and submitted to by every baptized believer in order to receive the promised Spirit of the Father and Son._

We exceedingly regret that Crosby has not given the signatures of the persons who subscribed this confession, nor any clue, by which we may trace the places of their residence.

This is one of many instances of his attempting to amalgamate all the Baptists into one denomination, and therefore he has endeavoured to prevent the General and the Particular Baptists from being distinguished.

*See the *Popish Catechism*, p 184 &c. and Mr. .H Danvers His *Treatise of Baptism*.

+Crosby, vol iii Appendix p 55

Cambridgeshire

Before the era of the Reformation there were in this county dissenters from the popish establishment, who had probably formed distinct congregations on the plan of the independent discipline. As early as the year 1547, in the village of Chesterton, there were persons who assembled privately for divine worship, and had preachers of their own. These endured much persecution, and were compelled to do penance half naked in the public market places of Ely and Cambridge, and in the churchyard of great Swaffham. * We have no account of the origin of the *Baptist churches* in this county; though it is likely that the principles had been disseminated by the Lollards, before the term *Anabaptist* was employed to reproach those who, denying the validity of Infant baptism, insisted on the necessity of baptism being administered upon a personal profession of faith. The only ministers we have heard of are:

HENRY DENNE.

JOHN DENNE, *Wibraham*

BENJAMIN MEDCALF, *Milbourn*

THOMAS COWLINGE, *Cambridge*

WILLIAM RICKS, *Wisbeach*

RICHARD FREEMAN, *Gamlingay*

- Robinson's Preface to Claude's Essay

Visitation Sermon

Henry Denne. His parents, it is said, designed him for the ministry even from his infancy, and to qualify him for the discharge of so important an office, he was sent to the University of Cambridge to receive his education. On his leaving the college, about the year 1630, he obtained ordination from the bishop of St. Davids, and soon after was presented to the living of Pyrton in Hertfordshire.

While he held this living, which was about ten years, he was very zealous and affectionate in the discharge of his ministry. Being very different in his character to the generality of the clergy of that period, he was greatly beloved and respected by his parishioners.

The events of 1644, both in church and state, are familiar to our readers. The overgrown power, and luxury of the ruling clergy, and the dissolute lives of the inferior ecclesiastics, made them a burden to the country, and the people groaned for a reformation.

It was in this year that Mr. Denne was fixed upon to preach at a Visitation held at *Baddok* in this county, to the clergy and gentry assembled on the occasional. This sermon was a great means of making him so very popular as he appears afterwards to have become.

Mr. Denne had been always suspected of puritanical principles, and the differences which now existed between the king and the parliament gave such persons an opportunity of expressing their minds more fully on the necessity of a reformation in religion. Considering he had now a suitable opportunity and being a man of great intrepidity, he resolved to expose the sin of persecution, the vices of the clergy, and the corruption in doctrine and discipline which existed in the established church.

Curious Introduction

The introduction to this sermon is preserved by Crosby, and certainly displays much ingenuity, and uncommon fortitude. After concluding his prayer he thus addressed his numerous and learned auditory.

*“Holy brethren and fathers, I am at this present time surprized with three passions; with joy, with fear, and with grief. My sorrow sympathizeth with yours. I am sorry, in the first place, that you have not a wiser man to speak unto you this day, especially so many sitting by; and for this I presume you are as sorrowful as I. I am right sorry, in the second place, that I shall this day trouble you with so large a discourse, as neither the quantity nor quality of the day will well permit. As a remedy for this, let me intreat your christian patience to tire me. This is my grief. My fear is, besides that ordinary fear which doth usually follow me at such exercises, especially at extraordinary times, and in unaccustomed places, I have yet another fear, that I shall this day be mistaken; not that I fear the mistaking of my words, for that were to call your judgements into question; but I fear lest you should mistake the intentions of my heart, and that I shall be thought to aim to some particular persons, To clear this, I call the Seacher of all hearts to record, before whom I protest this day, that I aim not at any man’s person; but I desire to be free from envy and malice, and to be in perfect charity with all men. And I do here again protest, that what I shall speak this day, is against the errors and vices, not against the persons of men. This is my fear. My joy is founded upon your fervent charity, joined with your sound judgment. In respect of your charity, I count it a part of my happiness, seeing it is as it is, to speak before you, who will be ready to cover my infirmities, and to pardon my failings, and gently to admonish me, if any thing be amiss. In respect of your judgment, I do count it a further happiness, that I have this day an opportunity to make confession of my faith, and to communicate my doctrine unto so learned, judicious, and indifferent *auditors*, which that I may do, I betake myself with speed to a portion of scripture, written *John v35. He was a burning and a shining light, and ye were willing for a season to rejoice in his light.*”*

Investigates Truth

The clergy were extremely uneasy while Mr. Denne was delivering his discourse, which occasioned a great noise. Many false reports being raised both of the preacher and the sermon, Mr. Donne published it by the title of *The doctrine and conversation of John the Baptist*. From this time he began to be noticed not only as a man of extraordinary parts, but also a proper man to assist in the proposed reformation. Mr. Disbournough who had much to do in public affairs, said of him, 'He is the ablest man in the kingdom for prayer, expounding, and preaching.' Mr. Edwards also, who is never to be suspected of partiality to those whom he calls *Sectaries* acknowledges, 'he had a very affectionate way of preaching and took much with the people.'

The government having declared their intention of reforming the church according to the word of God, and the example of the best reformed churches, Mr. Denne, with many other learned men, resolved to make a strict and impartial search after truth. This investigation led him to examine some religious subjects which he had received from education, and the truth of which he had taken for granted. He soon discovered that the practice of baptizing infants was without any foundation in the scriptures, or the writings of christians for the two first centuries after Christ.

Becomes a Baptist

He accordingly rejected the sentiment, and about the year 1643 was publicly baptized in London, and united himself to the congregation under the pastoral care of Mr. Thomas Lamb. This step exposed him to the resentment of those who were now at the helm of affairs, and it was not long before he felt that the right of private judgement was as great an error in the opinion of the Presbyterians, as it had been considered by the Episcopalians.

Having resigned his living at *Pyrton* and joined Mr. Lamb's church, he was sent by them to itinerate in Bedfordshire and Cambridgeshire. Having baptized some persons, the Committee for the latter county caused him to be apprehended on the charges of preaching against infant baptism, and for presuming to rebaptize. Upon this Mr. Denne appealed to the Parliament, who ordered him to be brought to London; and as his case could not be immediately attended to, he was kept prisoner in Lord Peter's house in

Aldersgate Street. It was now that the curious affair on the subject of baptism happened between him and Dr. Featly, mentioned vol 1 p 167.

Mr. Denne soon obtained his liberty, and notwithstanding he opposed the public opinion on the subject of baptism, he was appointed to the living of Elsly in this county. While here he was much followed and attracted great notice on account of his popular way of preaching. His appointment, however, gave much offence to the Presbyterians, who now began to conclude that none but themselves should be admitted to ecclesiastical benefices. Many of the neighbouring ministers were much prejudiced against him. Edwards brings some heavy charges which may probably have been true.

Enters the Army

He says Mr. Denne, while at Elsly preached much against tythes; - that he put down all singing of psalms in his church; - that he preached and prayed, and after he had done called out to know if any were not satisfied; "and then (says Edwards) they stand up that will object, and then he answers." But above all, he is charged with suffering mechanics and even soldiers to preach in his church.

Mr. Denne, though minister of a parish, did not confine himself to his living. From Edwards we learn that he traveled into Kent, and preached at Rochester, Chatham, and Canterbury, and baptized many persons at all these places. He preached also in other places in Cambridgeshire besides Elsly. It is further said that being appointed to preach on the lecture day at *St. Ives*, an order was obtained from the Committee of the county to prevent it. He however went into a church yard at some little distance and preached under a Yew Tree, a great number of the people following him, to the great mortification of his opposers.

Soon after this, in the year 1646, he was apprehended at Spalding in Lincolnshire for baptizing persons on a profession of faith. The reader will find an account of this circumstance, vol 1, p198.

The frequent interruptions Mr. Denne experienced while at Elsly, and the laws which were enacted at this period, led him to resolve to relinquish his living and enter the Parliament Army. Being a person of great courage, and being very zealous for the liberties of his country, he took upon him the duties of the *soldier*, as well as the *divine*; "and from his general conduct" (Crosby observes) "he procured himself a reputation, not inferior to many in both these characters."

His Death

One circumstance in his life is mentioned by Crosby, as giving proof of his being a good scholar, and a complete disputant; and in which he considerably served the Baptists. This was a public dispute held with Dr. Gunning, afterwards bishop of Chichester, in St. Clement's church near Temple Bar, on the subject of infant baptism. This controversy was maintained for two days, and was afterwards printed by Mr. Denne.

It is probable that he was a minister in London, after the restoration of the king, as his name is found to the Declaration against Venner's rebellion. It is said he finished his course soon after; but where he was at that period is not mentioned.

As to his doctrinal sentiments (says Crosby) "he seems to have taken what is called the middle way; being properly neither Calvinist nor Arminian. For though he held the doctrine of *personal election*, and the special efficacy of grace to some, yet he as zealously opposed the doctrine of *absolute reprobation*; asserting, that by the death of Christ, all men were put into the possibility of salvation, and were to have the offers of it; so that the destruction and ruin of those that perish is only of themselves."

"The same scheme" (adds Crosby) "was vindicated by bishop *Usher*, *Dr. Davenant*, and of late by the famous *Dr. Tillotson*. But for this Mr. Denne was accused by some who wrote against him, of being a great Antinomian and a desperate Arminian."

Mr. Denne published a work on the subject of baptism on a profession of faith as a requisite to church fellowship, in reply to Mr. Bunyan's book entitled, "A confession of my Faith, and a reason of my Practice." Mr. Bunyan mentions him repeatedly in his work called, "Peaceable Principles and true;" and speaks very contemptuously of him, as a person not deserving his notice. Crosby says that Mr. Denne died soon after the restoration, but he was living when Mr. Bunyan wrote the work referred to, which from many circumstances mentioned in it must have been written about 1670. A Clergyman, one of his friends, wrote the following epitaph, which was placed on his Tomb.

"To tell his wisdom, learning, goodness unto me

I need say no more; but here lies Henry Denne."

*Crosby vol 1 p 297-307 Gangraena Part 1 p 22, 23

General Baptists

John Denne. He was the son of Mr. Henry Denne, and imitated his father in his zeal to promote the cause of ;Christ. He was in sentiment an Arminian, and belonged to the General Baptist Denomination. His ministry was principally exercised in this , and the adjoining county of Huntingdon. He was the founder of the Society meeting at great Willbraham and Fullbourn. Mr. Denne began preaching at his own house at Willbraham. 1675. In 1699 he published a sermon, entitled, *Glad Tidings of Peace; wherein is manifested grace, mercy, and peace from God the Father, through Jesus Christ to all mankind.* The text on which this discourse was founded, was Acts x 36. It was dedicated to all the persons to whom he had ministered in the counties above-mentioned. In the preface it is intimated that it had lain by him corrected for the press for several years on account of the violent opposition some had made against it being printed. Crosby says he had not heard of his suffering persecution except in being once fined for preaching. *

*Works. 1. *The doctrine and conversation of John the Baptist*; a visitation sermon. 8 vo 1642.

2. *The foundation of children's baptism discovered and raised*; an answer to Dr. Featly, and Mr. Marshal. 4 to 1645

3. *The man of sin discovered, whom the Lord will destroy with the brightness of his coming.* 4 to . 1645

4. *The drag-net of the Kingdom of heaven; or Christ's drawing all men.* 8 vo. 1646

5. *The leveller's design discovered, a sheet.* 1649.

6. *A Contention for truth*; in two public disputations at St. Clement's Church, between Dr. Gunning and Henry Denne concerning Infant baptism. 4 to 1658

He also published a piece about 1660, on the propriety of Christians taking an Oath in civil matters, in opposition to the Quakers.

Church at Cambridge

Benjamin Medcalf. He founded a Society of General Baptists at Milbourn about 1675. He died in 1689. We have no particulars concerning him. After his decease, and Mr. Denne's, with whom he appears to have been connected, their places were supplied by Mr. Lacy, Mr. Solomon Hook, Mr. Thomas Clack, and Mr. Lewis Adley. Of these ministers we know nothing. +

Thomas Cowlinge. From the circumstance of Mr. Cowlinge attending the General Assemblies in London in 1689, and 1692, it is certain there was a baptist church at Cambridge at this period. There were probably persons who separated from Mr. Holcroft's congregation, but we have not account either of the formation of the church, nor any particulars concerning the minister.

*Crosby vol iii p 114

+ Thompson's MSS vol 1

Church at Gamlingay

William Ricks He was the minister of the church at *Wisbeach*, and attended the General Assembly both in 1689, and 1692. It is supposed that the people who formed this church were collected by the ministry of Mr. Holcroft, who died in 1692. It is probable that Mr. Ricks had preached among them several years before this time. In this year they purchased a piece of ground, and erected a Meeting-house. Mr. R. was one of the purchasers, and out-lived all the joint purchasers. He continued the pastor of this church till the year 1728, when he died in the 87th year of his age. About five years before this he had assigned the Meeting-house, Yard, and all the Appurtenances thereunto belongings, to the care of four Trustees. * We know nothing further of Mr. Ricks. The church was united in Association with those in Norfolk, Suffock, &c. in 1691. See vol 1 p 516.

Richard Freeman. He was originally a member of Mr. Gibbs' church at Newport-Pagnel, and by them it appears was called to the ministry. In March 1699 he was dismissed to the church at Bedford for the purpose of preaching at Gamlingay. This congregation was a branch of the church at Bedford, and was collected by Mr. Bunyan. During the persecuting period, the church-meetings were occasionally held here. A curious circumstance is mentioned in reference to his attending one of these meetings in the

account of Mrs. Agnes Beaumont. We know but little of the church at Gamlingay; but when after the death of Mr. Bunyan, in 1691, it was proposed to chuse Mr. Chandler, a Paedobaptist, as his successor, we find they hesitated in giving their consent; till they were assured by the church at Bedford, "That respecting baptism, whether of adults or Infants, they resolved it should be no bar to communion; as they had intended to get a person to administer believers' baptism."

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Church at Gamlingay

With this declaration they were satisfied, and continued in connection with them till 1710, when we find this entry in the Bedford records. "March 29. The brethren and sisters in and about Gamlingay having determined to inchurch themselves because of their distance from us, did desire their dismissal from this church, which was prayed about, and they were desired to bring the names of such persons next church meeting, who were concerned in this design, in order to their dismissal, it being judged more for God's glory and their edification to be a distinct church." This request was complied with the next church meeting, and a separate church consisting of 30 members, chose Mr. Freeman their Pastor, who continued with them till his death, May 8th, 1733, in the 69th year of his age. From this statement it appears he was Minister of this congregation upwards of 33 years. The church always admitted of mixed communion, but its ministers, with two exceptions, have been all Baptists. *

The above are all the particulars we have been able to collect of the Baptists in this County, in the seventeenth Century. After the death of Mr. Holcroft, the father of Non-conformity in Cambridge, and the removal of Mr. Hussey from the town, some events took place which led to the establishment of the baptist church which at present exists. The history of this must at present be deferred.

- Thompson's MSS vol 1 Bedford Church Book. Abstract of the gracious dealing of God, &c. by Samuel James, MA Ed.. 8 p 75, 76
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Cheshire

From the circumstance of Mr. Thomas Hardcastle, afterwards an eminent minister at Bristol, being imprisoned in Chester goal, it is probable this county had the advantage of his zealous and faithful labours. Most of our County goals have been consecrated by the residence of the suffering servants of Christ.

Cornwall

There was a Baptist Church at Looe, in this county, at an early period. It is probable it was connected with the church at Plymouth, under the ministry of Mr. Abraham Cheare. Mr. Thomas Cowlinge was its minister after the Revolution, and attended the meetings of the General Assembly in London.

Devonshire

Some of our churches in this County are of ancient date; and their ministers and founders of great and deserved reputation. These excellent men, zealous in the cause of their divine Master, were favoured with much peace and tranquility for several years. This was succeeded by a long period of severe persecution, which tried both their faith and patience to the utmost. Some of these worthies survived the storm, but others fell victims to the unrelenting spirit of an unwise and cruel government, which punished the conscientious Nonconformist for refusing to submit to ecclesiastical impositions, in the same way as it did those who were *evil doers* and enemies to the State.

Ministers in Devonshire

The ministers of whom we have any information are the following _

ABRAHAM CHEARE, *Plymouth*

ROBERT BROWN, ----

ROGER HOLDENBY, ----

SAMUEL BUTTALL, ----

---- FLUTE, ----

NATHANIEL HODGES ---

JOHN CAREW, *Exeter*

COLONEL HOLMES ----

WILLIAM PHIPPS, ----
 RICHARD SAMPSON, ---
 ROBER STEED, *Bovey Tracey*
 PHILIP CAREY, *Dartmouth*
 SAMUEL HART, *Ladswell*.
 THOMAS HALWELL, *Luppit*
 THOMAS STONEHAM, *South Molton*
 JOHN BALL, *Tiverton*
 TRISTRAM TRUVIN,----
 RICHARD TIDMARSH,---
 ----DOUBLE, *Holdsworthy*
 ----- BASS, *Falmouth*,

Abraham Cheare. He is the first minister of the church at Plymouth of whom we have any mention. This church must have existed some considerable time before his call to the pastoral office; as it was signed by 150 members. He had probably been a minister of the Paedobaptist persuasion, as the same minute which records his being baptized and added to the church in 1648, mentions also his call to become the pastor. The following year he accepted this invitation, and united himself, it is said, with *a poor despised people, to walk in all the ordinances and commandments of the Lord blameless.*

Abraham Cheare

In the year 1651, his people purchased the land in Pigmarket, and appropriated a house for divine worship. We have no particulars either of his labours or success at this time; but we find that he attended the *Western Association*, held at Dorchester, in 1658.

The Restoration of the king, in 1660, was the signal for the renewal of opposition to the Nonconformists, who for the past twenty years had enjoyed the sun-shine of prosperity. Mr. Cheare was not long uninterrupted, and in 1661 was committed to Exeter goal, under the heavy charge of *encouraging religious assemblies*. We suppose this was in consequence of the measures adopted by the Court on account of *Venner's Rebellion*, in which it was pretended all Dissenters were implicated. After being imprisoned about three months, he was liberated in consequence, no doubt, of the King's Coronation, when the suffering Non-conformists were discharged from the prisons.

The gratitude of his heart on this occasion, is expressed in a letter written by him, and dated 26th of the 4th month, 1662. *As for my part ;(says he) my Father graciously indulges me, and the lambs here, giving us an undeserved covert even where Satan's seat is, while other flocks are dispersed and scattered. Some from our neighbouring parts are sent to the place of ancient experience, _*(the Prison)where they have a stock of prayers and presence to begin upon:they begin on straw, learning to endure hardness as good soldiers. The Lord make that word good to them which often hath been, in that place, sweet to me. Exodus 23:25; and at length, Eccle. 4:14. I expect every day the same lot.*

Nor were these presages of the loss of his liberty ill-founded. This blessing was soon snatched from him, and from thousands besides, by the Act of Uniformity. In 1662, he was again committed to the aforesaid prison, for holding unlawful conventicles, and refusing to conform to the established church.

While here he wrote many excellent letters to his friends, exhorting them to constancy and steadfastness. Many of these, a few years since, were in good preservation; one only we believe has been published. This was addressed to Mr. William

Punchard, London, bearing date 17th of the 7th month, 1662. This person, it appears from the letter, had been imprisoned, and it is probable was a minister of the West of England, who on account of persecution, was obliged to leave his home and fly to London. The letter, our readers will perceive, *smells of a prison*; and is a proof that christians may _glory in tribulations._

Mr. Cheare s Letter

The beautie of the Father_s ornament sett in majesty upon you.

My Deare,.

I received yours of the 11th of the seventh month; and in it a testimonie of teaching and supporting grace and presence continued to you abroad, which he is pleased not to deny his poor worms here, in these holes of the earth, where violence hath thrust us as in so many slaughter-houses of men; but over-ruling grace makes them as the presence-chambers of the great King, where he brings and feasts his favourites with the best things, and proclaims among them, _Thus shall it be done to them whome the King delights to honour._ This honor have not all, that yet are saints, much less have any this mercy, who either through the feare or formalitie of their unconverted souls are enforced shamefully to put off that profession which hypocritically they did put on in a day of seeming prosperity; not but these walls as a drawnett do enclose bad and good: but at length a discovery is made more manifest, he chooseth in this furnace of affliction; a week in a *prison* giving plainer discoverie of a man_s spirit, than a month in a *church*. Of these experiments I no way doubt but you have obtained a good degree by *the long exercises you have gon under this way*, and have not only taken out lessons for yourself, but wherewithall to teach, warn, and support others, with the same that you have obtained from the Lord: whereunto I pray you may make your advances beyond others, who having faced trials a great while, are at length persuaded to give way, to the staine of their former standing, and staggering of such as have learned no farther yett to behold the power of the Lord to support, than only as it is either manifested or clouded in creatures like themselves; meanwhile neglecting that inspection they ought to have therein directly and immediately through the promises, that are of power to supply those that waite on the Lord with renewed strength _ even then when youths faints, and are wearie, and young men utterlie faile.

This afternoon there is to be committed to the earth the dust of our sister *Firkle*, whose spirit was yesterday commended to heaven, after she had sustained a long conflict betwixt the two inmates, her better part breathing after that state for which she hath been long preparing. We are left to bewaile the loss, of which few are truly apprehensive, according to her worth; and to learn some living dispensations from her dying dispensations, who hath left divers lively testimonies of her fixed faithfulness: - one is this; that she desired that, if the *Reader* approached to compliment her into the womb of her mother earth, they that attend her should leave her bones (as Syon_sare scattered) at the grave_s mouth, *Psa 141:7*. The poor lambs that I have left have been visited by the constables again and again at their meetings, summoned before the Mayor, fined for not coming to church _ yet have a little strength left to meet in the same place, expose their goods to be spoiled, &c. rather than consent to promote that which their soule is grieved at. Those with you are as formerly. Your old Persecutor is come home, but hath hitherto

done nothing. Brother Ston, who I hope is by this time with you, well escaped him. Clement J. [Jackson] was yesterday here with me, with whom I have been refreshed. Our bishop, Ward, came to this city last week, and was received in great state, but hath been ever since ill, its said, in the black jaundice. The Deputy Lieuts are most of them sitting, and (_tis said) we shall be brought before them, but to what end is not known. Two or three troops are in town, and going forth this morning; of their designe we know nothing, but its reported to be to take up the non-conforming persons _ perhaps to give security. They at Dalwood have a very large and increasing meeting, where the Lord is present as a covert to them: at Loo, they are hitherto quietly and comfortably kept. Fear and fury disperseth others heer about. St.* (perhaps Mr. Steed of Dartmouth) is here at present, to give us a visit; they there are yet preserved. The Lieuts. Are now gone to *Castle*, and we expect a call, so that I have not time to enlarge; but I desire to be remembered to all that love and fear our Lord Jesus; to your yoke-fellow in particular, and to dear D. when you see him; he sayeth you have sent somewhat, which I expect, beside what you sent by Blag; which I have sent for. All heer are well, and salute you; not else breaks off.

Your, lovingly, &c.

Banished for Life.

After being imprisoned full three years at Exeter, he was permitted to visit his native town of Plymouth. By whose kindness this liberty was obtained is not mentioned: it could not have been from the favour of the Jailor, as in the case of Bunyan, because it is expressly stated, that during this time *he endured great inhumanities from merciless Jailors*. His enemies finding him at large, caused him to be apprehended, and he was again committed a prisoner to the Guildhall, Plymouth. This was in 1665, he was kept here about a month; during which period his persecutors obtained an order for his perpetual banishment. The place they fixed on for this purpose, doubtless with the design of increasing his distress, was the *Island of St. Nicolas*; which being so near the residence of his friends, while they were prevented from having any converse with each other, must have indeed *added affliction to his bonds*. Before leaving the Guildhall, he wrote the following lines.

Verses affixed to the wall of the prison, at the Guildhall in Plymouth, where A.C. was detained a month, and thence sent to the Island, the 27th September 1665.

_Nigh four years since, sent out from hence,

To Exon Goal was I;

But special grace in three month_s space

Wrought out my liberty.

Till *Bartholomew*, in sixty two
That freedom did remain:
When without bail, to Exon goal
I hurried was again.
Where having lain as do the slain
_Mong dead men, wholly free,
Full three years space, my native place
By leave I came to see.
And thought not then, I here again
A month_s restraint should find;
Since to my *Den*, cast out from men
I_m during life designed.
But since my lines, the Lord assigns,
In such a lot to be;
I kiss the rod, confess my God
Deals faithfully with me.
My charged crime, in his due time,
He fully will decide;
And until then, forgiving men,
In Peace with him I _bide_

Much Afflicted

While in his _Patmos,_ as Luther used to call his place of secesy, he, with many other good people, who were also suffering for Nonconformity, was kept close prisoner, being constantly under a military guard.

He had not been in the Island many days before a violent sickness seized him, which continued three quarters of a year; but recovering a little, he wrote the following poem of grateful acknowledgement to the praise of the Saviour, and prefixed the following dedication.

_To his truly scared Majesty, the High and Mighty Potentate, King of Kings, and Lord of Lords, Prince of Life and Peace, Heir of all things, and Head over all things to the Church.

_The humble prostrature and thankful acknowledgement of a poor prisoner of hope, whose life and Peace, Heir of all things, and Head over all things to the Church.

_The humble prostrature and thankful acknowledgement of a poor prisoner of hope, whose life upon all accounts, hath been marvellously preserved, and delivered with a great Salvation from the pit of corruption.

Poem

_Most glorious Sovereign! To thy feet is brought

The trembling offspring of a contrite thought;

By a poor captive, who attempts to raise

An *Ebenezer* to his Saviour_s praise _

A lasting pillar as in conscience favours found;

With grace to succour in a needful hour,

From death_s dominion and the tempter_s power.

But when thy worm reflects what it can bring,

Comporting with the honour of a king.

Of such bright majesty as Angels must

Their faces veil before, shall sinful dust

Have hold access,, and kind acceptance meet

For self and service at thy burning feet?

May hair, a badger_s skin, a widow_s mite.

From willing minds find favour in thy sight;-
A pair of pigeons or a turtle dove,
Find kind construction from the God of love!
Is there more overlaid by the supply.
To help such weakness in infirmity?
A costly cov_ring doth thy grace provide,
Their blemishes to veil, their spots to hide,
Who from their sense of need and duty, bring
Their lowly homage to their lofty king?
On such encouragements here trembling stands
A contrite waiter, though with empty hands;
Whose bag and basket speak him to be come
More like a beggar, than a bringer home.
Who though he aims and longs in this address,
His utmost obligations to express,
To charge his conscience, and discharge his vow,
Abandon other Lords, to Jesus bow;
Yet finds in all, that void of royal aid.
Nought worthy of thee can be thought or said.
Apart from Christ, the host attempts, alas!
Are tinkling cymbals, and as sounding brass;
Such stately structures prove but wood and hay
I th_ test and contest of that burning day;

These dear experiments, so often tried,
All boasting confidence from flesh must hide
Of self-sufficiency, in best attire,
To form that work, or breathe but that desire,
Or think that thought, that can, in justice, claim
One heavenly aspect, on its act, or aim,
What then remains? _ thy worm must prostrate fall.
While sentence from thy presence past on all
Which self hath gloried in or flesh hath gained,
With whatsoe_er to Adam appertained;
His wisdom, will, his power, delight, desire,
Or what his art, or industry acquire.
His noblest faculties, accepted parts,
His liberal sciences, or rarest arts;
Nay his best righteousness, his all in all
Must be resigned, surrendered, left to fall,
Be sentenced, crucified, despoiled, disgraced,
And at the feet of conquering Jesus placed;
That on its ruins, Gospel grace may rear
A living pillar, thy new name to bear!_

Letter

The grateful disposition of this excellent man is manifest in a letter sent by him, on behalf of himself and his fellow sufferers, to some persons who had sent them a present of provisions, dated the 22nd of the 9th month, 1667.

This is dedicated _Unto our brethren and friends, in the bonds and bowels of the gospel, whose hands have made them willing under the bounteous influences of the God of Israel, to comfort the hearts of the unworthy prisoners of the Lord in *Plymouth Island*, by a costly present; and to every cue that hath contributed or helped therein, to a tender groan, or value of a cup of cold water, be a large recompense of reward, given in grace, and ascertained in glory, by him who is not unfaithful, to forget such labour of love shewed to his name.

Letter Continued

_Beloved and esteemed, as is meet in the Lord:

Although we are hitherto detained from the personal and particular knowledge of you by name, whose counsels and care have been concerned, in this liberal expression of your sympathy with a few poor undeserving creatures: in which matter we should be glad to receive distinct information, as far as such a desire might be thought modest in us to ask, and be expedient for you to grant; to the end, that our supplications for you and the applications to you, might be more direct and particular. Yet ere that come to hand, and lest *Matt. vi 3* may have influenced (though we think the reason of it binds not in this case) we thought it lay on us not to forbear the present acknowledgment, such as it is, (at least as a forerunner to what we should be willing to offer more particular) that hereby you may be informed, that through the Lord's providence the whole of it came safe to hand, and by his grace we hope the heavenly voice in it, hath and through your prayers, will yet have a more effectual access to our hearts, to lay us under those obligations to a faithful, cheerful, unwearied trusting in him, and waiting on him at all times, which we are satisfactorily persuaded was the design of your devising those liberal things for us. Under which engagements, we reckon ourselves bound at least, to give you some account of ourselves in the present respect; that if it may be our rejoicing in each other, it may be rendered more reciprocal, we comforted together with you, by the mutual faith and love both of you and us. _This letter is very long and may be read in Crosby. Vol iii p 18.

Dies in Banishment

About four months after the above date he was seized with a violent sickness, which in a few days put a period to his sufferings and to his life. He died in his place of banishment, _without pang or considerable groan, _ March 5, 1668.

The account of his last illness is very edifying, as it proves that though the christian may have tribulation in the world, yet by faith he may possess *peace in Christ*, and *glorify God even in the fires.*

It was written by a friend who was constantly with him and was published immediately after his decease, in 1668. The account occupies upwards of forty pages of the book, entitled, _*Words in Season: _from that late worthy Sufferer, and Servant of the Lord Jesus, an able Minister of the New Testament according to that character, 2 Cor*

6:4, 5, &c. *Mr. Abraham Cheare, viz. 1 Faith's Conquest over the Tortures and Tenders of an Hour of Temptation, on Heb 11:35. 11. The Embalming of a Dead Cause, on Mark 14:8. 111. Remarkable Discourses on his Dying Bed with Copies and Extracts of letters, on several occasions. Useful for those, whose hearts are engaged to serve the will of God in this generation.*

The Editor of his *Words in Season,* &c. has affixed to it the following
Postscript from his Posthumous works.

If any enquire, what might occasion so much severity, as to obtain the Author so many years and until death a Prisoner? It may suffice to insert here for the Reader's satisfaction, that in the state of his case left under his hand, setting forth the illegality and unrighteousness of the proceedings against him, he concludes it thus. If it should be suggested. *Perhaps he is a Ringleader*; this true character of the person may alleviate jealousies of that kind.

His Character.

He was born at Plymouth, of mean yet honest parentage, is not by kindred or any alliance related to any person or family of note at all; was not brought up to learning at any University; or sent any where to travel for education, or experience; but contrariwise, brought up, and kept diligently by his Parents to work, at the poor yet honest trade of a *Fuller*; never lived out of that town a month together all his life, except in a journey some weeks on an occasion about sixteen years since to London, besides what he underwent by constraint in Prison. Never in the former wars was enlisted in any troop or company under pay; and in Trained Bands of the town where he served, never was accounted worthy of promotion so much as a Corporal; nor in any Corporation, whereof he was a member, ever advanced so high as a Constable; never bettered his estate one farthing by all his propitious advantages, that might have given him opportunity for so doing; nor is conscious to himself of the least desire of adding to what he hath, by any present or future advantages that any favourable overtures of the times may tempt him with; never was advanced to, or improved in any place, or office, of trust or profit, civil, military, or ecclesiastical; save only for some few weeks unknown to him, and against his will, he was mustered a chaplain to the Fort, but quickly got himself discharged of that again. Never was concerned in, nor *truly* charged with any plot, meeting, or tumult, giving the least disturbance or occasion of fear, or jealousy.

Christian Advice

This one thing then only can remain to give colour to such proceedings. That about *eighteen* years since, he being convinced of his duty to the Lord, by evidence of scriptural light, joyned himself in an holy Covenant, to walk in all the ordinances of the Lord blameless, to the best of his light and power, in fellowship with a poor and despised people.

Crosby says, _Mr. Cheare was ejected from Plymouth, and was afterwards minister to a numerous congregation at Looe in Cornwall._It does not appear that he ever accepted a parochial charge and therefore he could not have been *ejected*.The numerous congregation of which he was the pastor was not at Looe, but at Plymouth, though this probably included Looe, Penryn, Falmouth, Holdsworthy and other places, as persons residing at all these towns were connected with the church at Plymouth.He was a very laborious and useful minister of the gospel.His letters breathe much of the spirit of Christ, and manifest great intrepidity. One of these, dated 30th of the 5th month, 1664, addressed to *a minister taken at a meeting and cast into prison*, thus concludes._Sell not for a supposed opportunity, to buy and sell and get gain, your real opportunity to exalt Jesus Christ in suffering for his Name_s sake; most who make haste this way out of bonds, do usually reckon, they will be more prudent next, than to suffer for a circumstance; and commonly God shews himself more jealous of his glory, than to employ them again in so honourable a work.Unless as one of the Martyr_s in Queen Mary_s time, who recanted his profession because (said he) I cannot burn for Christ: but shortly after his house was burnt, and he must burn without Christ.The Lord strengthen you with might in your soul. Amen._

Mr. Brown Succeeds Him

Mr. Cheare, in 1656, united with some other of his brethren in publishing an address to their churches, entitled,*Sighs of Sion,_ &c.* of which we have given a full account under the article of Mr. John Pendarvis, at Abingdon, in Berkshire.He wrote during his imprisonments, several little tracts, and some hymns and verses.These were printed in 1672.We have not been able to procure them.

During the period of Mr. Cheare_s sufferings the church at Plymouth were vexed with continual oppressions.In the year of his death, 1668, persecution broke out with redoubled fury in consequence of the _*Conventicle Act*_ being passed.They were for several years after this period harassed with every species of cruelty, and were not permitted to meet publicly, nor could they procure a pastor till king James_s Act of Indulgence, 1687.At this period they invited a respectable Paedobaptist to take the oversight of them..

Robert Brown. He was invited to take the charge of the church by the following letter.

Letter of Invitation

_The 30th of the 11th month, 1687.The Church of Jesus Christ in Plymouth, whereof our beloved brother Abraham Cheere was Pastor, being assembled together with fasting and prayers, and having, we hope, obtained counsel and direction from God our Father _ in pursuance of the power and authority Jesus Christ hath given to his churches, to choose their own pastors _ do in his name jointly, unanimously, every member severally for ourselves _ whose names are underwrit, with hearts and hands lifted up to God, call and choose our well-beloved brother Robert Brown, as one chosen and called of

God for the ministry of the Gospel, to be our Pastor, to watch, feed, rule, oversee, and to take charge of the souls of this little flock of Jesus Christ, and to discharge all the duties which the Lord Jesus, the great Bishop of souls hath required of you in that relation, according to the ability of gift and grace bestowed upon you. Promising, or solemnly engaging ourselves, in the sight of God, angels, and men, on our part towards you also, jointly and unanimously as a Church of Christ, and every one severally for himself as a member of the same body, to subject ourselves to your rule and government in the Lord, to perform and discharge all the duties which the Lord hath required of us towards you in that relation, and one towards another as he shall enable us _ and that your work and labour for the Lord among us may be comfortable to you, according to our capacities, abilities, and as the Lord shall bless us, to make suitable provision for yourself and family. And therefore in his name, and for his sake, and the interest of the gospel in these parts, we do earnestly intreat and beseech you in the bowels of Jesus Christ, to accept to this offered service for your Lord and Master, unto which the Holy Ghost hath in a good measure fitted, and prepared you, and this church of Christ as aforesaid hath unanimously called you. And that there may be no obstructions or discouragements remaining, we have considered the things wherein you and we are otherwise minded in principle and practice, the foundation of gospel faith and conversation held fast, we do solemnly declare ourselves to be agreed. Impositions on neither side, as knowing it to be the work of our Lord himself to reveal his truths unto us. And if in the providence of God there should come a time of scattering, wasting through persecution or otherwise, or any thing should fall out among us to make your continuance among us grievous and burdensome to you, or that you shall judge in your own conscience that God calls you to any other place, it shall not be a prison to you, but we will readily comply with any thing you shall desire of us in the will of God, consistent to our duty each to other, and give you a letter of recommendation, or dismissal, cases of public scandal excepted. Lastly, with respect to the church of Worcester, if there be any hesitation remaining upon your spirit on this account, and you shall hereafter be convinced that it is the mind and will of God you should return to them again, we shall give you your free liberty therein, as if there were no obligation by virtue of this relation betwixt us._

Death of Mr. Brown

This letter was signed by 66 members, who it appears were the whole of the church, which proves that it was reduced by persecution and other circumstances to a very low condition.

Under these discouraging circumstances Mr. Brown accepted the call of the church. But the happiness which they promised themselves from his piety and talents was but of short duration. After enjoying his ministry about three months, this great and good man fell asleep in the arms of his Redeemer on the 22nd of February 1688.

As a tribute of regard, the church erected a monument in their meeting, to perpetuate his memory.

_Ah cruel Death, to separate so soon

The lovely pastor and his pious charge:
Their bright_ning day to overcloud at noon,
Thine own despotic empire to enlarge.
But soon the Saviour will avenge their cause,
And thou dread tyrant shalt his voice obey:
Rescued with power from thy devouring jaws,
They_ll meet again in realms of endless day._

Invite Mr. Holdenby

Mr. Palmer says, from Dr. Calamy, _He was a fifth monarchy man, and wrote against hearing the parish minister.Dr. Stillingfleet remarked of his *Jerubbaal* [the book referred to] that it contained the substance of all that had been said by the old Brownists.He was generally esteemed a good scholar.He died at Plymouth in consequence of excessive preaching.He appears to have been of the Baptist denomination.Mr. James says, There was a Baptist Minister of this name, and doubtless the same person, who in 1670, resided in London, and in 1678 at Worcester.He was this year invited to succeed Mr. Hardcastle, at Broadmead, Bristol, but in 1679 he was settled at Westmancoat in Worcestershire._ (Noncon. Mem. V iii p 416.The supposition that he was a Baptist is unfounded.)

Deprived of their pastor, in the month of April they enjoyed the labours of a Mr. Warner, of London, for two Lord_s days; they proposed to him the pastoral charge, and a salary of 40 pounds per annum.This Mr. Warner acceded to; but on going back to town, he altered his mind and did not return.

Roger Holdenby.The church then directed their attention towards this person, who had been a minister in Ireland.The records say, _1688, 8th month.The Church sent a letter of invitation to Mr. Holdenby in Ireland, which he accepted and came over by the next vessel; and on sufficient trial gave him a call to be their pastor, he obliging himself by word and writing to be the church_son his acceptance of their call. But finding some of the members particular, his engagements became uneasy, and he desired the church to give him his dismissal.In consequence the church met the 20th of the 3rd month, 1690, to consult on this affair and determined in the negative._The records further state, the _The 4th of 4th month 1690, brother Holdenby made a second demand to the church for his dismissal, by a letter in which he reserves liberty to leave the Church when he pleased. In consequence the church met and sent him the following letter.

The Sister_s Letter

_The Church assembled have agreed to leave our brother Holdenby to his desires in his demands, desiring the same liberty for ourselves, only provided that if our brother Holdenby should dispose of himself elsewhere, and this Church may in the providence of God be supplied with another pastor, that three months at least shall be allowed on both sides to part with free consent and agreement.

But brother Holdenby would neither agree to this, but left them at the close of the same month.

Mr. Holdenby attended the general Assembly in 1689 as the pastor of the church at Plymouth; from whence he appears to have returned to Tiverton.

The church was now destitute of a pastor but not of a minister. This was Samuel Buttall. How long he had been in the ministry we have no information; but he attended the Assembly in 1689, in company with Mr. Holdenby. His call to the pastoral office was a little singular. This is recorded in the following manner, _The church having been without a pastor about three months, the Sisters agreed among themselves to recommend their brother, then absent, Samuel Buttall, to the rest of the brethren, for the office of an elder in the house of God to administer in all ordinances, and wrote the following letter for this purpose.

Invitation to Mr. Buttall

These for our well-beloved brethren, and truly honourable in our Lord Jesus Christ.

_We the sisters of this church, having seriously considered the present state and condition of God_s vineyard in this place, that once as it were planted in a very fruitful hill, is now become almost a desolate wilderness, from the many blasts of providence which have attended it; for Sion_s sake we would not keep silence nor hold our peace, but look unto the Lord for the return of his glory. And also we think it is now our concern earnestly to request you, our brethren, duly to consider under our present circumstances what the Lord points out to us as our duty: which we humbly conceive is the calling our brother Buttall to the ministry and office of an Elder in the house of God, administering in all ordinances. We desire, brethren, you would seriously consider of this our request, who are not the smallest number of the church. And we pray you would without delay, as one man, set yourselves to this good work, which we hope will tend very much to the glory of God and our mutual comfort.

Signed by us, your Sisters, on the 6th day of the 7th month, 1690. 42 in number.

The consequence of this letter was that the church, 52 in number, agreed to give Mr. Buttall an invitation, which he accepted. We find him attending the third general Assembly in London in 1692, when he was one of the seven persons appointed a

Committee to reconcile the angry brethren, who had written with some acrimony on the subject of singing the praises of God in the public Assembly.

Mr. Buttall continued with the church several years. He however removed to Topsham in 1707, where he probably died. At the latter part of his time his labours were only occasional, and we find in one place that _a brother was called to administer the ordinance of baptism in brother Buttall's absence, _ Crosby has nothing about him except mentioning him among those ministers _ who were noted for piety, zeal, and usefulness.

Succeeded by Mr. Hodges

---Flute. He was an assistant to Mr. Buttall in the church at Plymouth till 1698, when he left it for some other situation.

Mr. Buttall was succeeded by Mr. Nathaniel Hodges. He was a minister in London when he received a letter of invitation from the church. This letter was dated 21st of the 11th month, and was signed by 41 members. Mr. Hodges, being now in his 23rd year, accepted the invitation, and continued with them just three years. On the 21st of the 10th month 1701, *_succeeding to earthly honours._* As the written records express it, he quitted the church and settled in London. We shall give some further account of him in the list of London ministers.

It is remarkable that this Society prospered most when it was as a _bush burning with fire._ Whilst they were exposed to cruel and almost constant persecution it took deep root, it sent forth its boughs to the rivers and its branches filled the land. There is an account of many gifted brethren belonging to it who were zealous useful ministers in the church of Christ: as a Mr. Double, who principally presided over a branch of the church at Holdsworthy: Mr. James Hitt, who administered the ordinance of baptism in the absence of Mr. Buttall; he attended the general Assembly as the Messenger of the church at Dalwood in 1689, and in the 1692 as the Messenger from Plymouth: Mr. Bass, who in 1692, was given up to the church at Falmouth: Mr. Flute, who assisted Mr. Buttall, and with Mr. James Murch occasionally preached at Dalwood and Lyme. This latter person in 1693, requested his dismission to the church at Dalwood, but it was not granted till 1698.

Church at Exeter

The days of ease and prosperity which followed the glorious Revolution seem to have had an unfavourable influence on the zeal and purity of many professors of the gospel. Persecution winnowed the churches, and the floor was purged of great numbers. The smiles of the world produced similar effects. These events prove that both adversity and prosperity are dangerous to the christian, and that none but the real believers will *endure temptation.*

Taking leave of this Church, we next notice that at Exeter of which the following account is extracted from Mr. Thompson's MSS.

_The opinion of the Anti-paedobaptists having got into the Army spread to the garrison at Exeter, where a Col Holmes preached, the same who was afterwards executed for being concerned with Monmouth in his expedition.

_About the year 1654, the Cathedral lands being sold, were purchased by a Mr. Carew, who fitted up the great hall as a meeting for the Baptists, whose opinions he had embraced. They met there till the Restoration, and it is apprehended Carew sometimes preached to them. The Magistrates being enemies to all Sectaries, they were often disturbed, particularly once they were obliged to call their friends from the Castle, who with lighted match and loaded musket guarded the preacher. At the Restoration Carew was executed as a Regicide, and the people obliged to leave the City. They founded three small churches, viz. Topsham, Thorverton, and Honiton_s Clift.

The original Church Book at Exeter (which was designedly destroyed in 1766) begun Feb 9, 1681-2. Their number was then small, and it appeared by that book that every absent member was named; the church sent [messengers] to him; and his excuse was recorded. Who was the first pastor does not appear. Mr. William Phips was Pastor in 1685.

John Carew esq.

It is thought he died about 1690. There was one Holmes, supposed to be a younger brother of the Colonel mentioned above, who lived near Exeter. He was a man of uncommon sanctity and even severity of life and manners. He preached till he was near 100 years of age, and died about 1709.

In 1689 when king James drove the Protestants out of Ireland, some families of Baptists took refuge in Exeter; among whom was a Mr. Kitteral, who was deacon of the church at Exeter, and being a man of abilities was a steady support to them. About 1692 the people chose Mr. Richard Sampson for their pastor. He came from Plymouth, a man of plain address, and no great learning; but under him the church flourished greatly! They fitted up an old chapel at Catharine_s Gate for a meeting house. _From this account we learn that the Baptists here were greatly persecuted after the Restoration. This agrees with what Mr. Cheare says, when in Exeter goal _ *fear and fury disperseth others hereabout.* _There is no doubt but the Baptists at Exeter would feel the weight of the fury of such a bishop as Ward, who it is said undertook to be both a *spy* and *informer*, to hunt down the Nonconformists! From one of Mr. Cheare_s letters preserved in his *Words in Season*,_ it is said, _the goal is full of them._

One of King Charles_s Judges

John Carew. This gentleman being mentioned as greatly serving the Baptist cause at Exeter by purchasing a place of meeting, and perhaps by preaching among them it seems desirable to present the reader with some account of him. Ludlow says, _he was a

gentleman of an ancient family in the County of Cornwall, educated in one of the Universities, and at the Inns of Court. He had a plentiful Estate, and being chosen to serve in the Parliament, he was elected into the council of state, and employed in many important affairs; in which he shewed the warrant for his execution. He opposed the usurpation of Oliver Cromwell when in 1653 he declared himself Lord Protector. Though Cromwell had before courted his friendship, yet he now summoned him, with Major General Harrison and Col. Rich to appear before the Council, requiring them to surrender the Commissions they had received from him; and because they refused to engage not to act against him and his government, he sent them to several prisons. Mr. Carew was sent to Pendennis in Cornwall. It is probable it was after this period that he embraced the principles of the Baptists, and united himself with the Baptists at Exeter. It is likely he continued in private life till the Restoration, when he was called to a different scene. The king being fully established, the Parliament took every opportunity to gratify him by bringing to trial the Judges of his Father. Ludlow says, _And to shew the readiness to gratify the revenge of those at the helm with the blood of as many as they could find any colour to abandon; being informed that Mr. John Carew, who had not at all concealed himself, had been seized by a warrant from a Justice of the Peace; that his name being mistaken in the warrant, and the officer refusing to detain him till that error should be amended, Mr. Carew told him that he was, as he conceived, the person designed to be seized, and therefore acquainted him with the place to which he was going; yet for all this (though happening within the fourteen days limited by the Proclamation, and on the way to London, where such persons were directed to render themselves) the major part of the House of Commons voted this not to be a surrender, and excepted him both in Life and Estate._

Executed at Regicide

When Mr. Carew was put upon his trial, he earnestly desired that council might be allowed him in that point of law touching the Authority by which he had acted; but this was denied him. Perceiving that all he could say was to no purpose, he frankly acknowledged that he sat in the Highcourt of Justice, and had signed two Warrants, one for summoning the Court in order to the King's trial, and another for his execution. The reader who may be desirous of reading his defence which he was allowed to make, though not without many indecent and illegal interruptions, is referred to the Account of the Trial of the Regicides, and to Ludlow's Memoirs. Being found guilty, he was executed at Charing Cross on the next Monday, the 15th of October 1660. His quartered body was returned to Newgate upon the Hurdle which carried him; but upon the intercession of his friends his Majesty gave leave for his body to be buried. All the rest who were executed on this occasion, except one, were placed upon the top of the city gates. Speaking of his death and that of Lieutenant General Harrison, Ludlow remarks, _Even their enemies confessing that more steadiness of mind, more contempt of death, and more magnanimity could not be expressed. To all who were present with them, or at the place where the sentence was executed, they declared that having engaged in the cause of God and their country, they were not ashamed to suffer in the way their enemies thought fit, openly avowing the inward satisfaction of their minds when they reflected upon the actions for which they had been condemned, not doubting the revival of the

same cause; and that a time should come when men would have better thoughts of their persons and proceedings._ (Ludlow_s Memoirs, Vol II. 439, 563.Vol III. 41, 45, 63-65, 69.)

Colonel Holmes

Colonel HolmesWe have no account when he began his ministry at Exeter, nor how long he continued with this church. Being zealous for the Protestant cause, and for the liberties of his country grievously oppressed by the Popish Monarch James II. He united with some others in London to stand by and assist the Duke of Monmouth when opportunity offered. In order to accomplish this plan he accompanied the Duke to Holland, and returned with him in 1685. The Expedition failing, the Colonel was amongst the many distinguished persons, who were executed at Lyme in Dorsetshire, near which place they had landed a few weeks before. Being brought with eleven others from Dorchester, he cheerfully looked at the people as they passed through Lyme, and advised them not to be discouraged at their severe deaths; saying that it was their hard lot to lose their lives though in so good a cause. He believed the Protestant religion was bleeding and in a way towards extirpation. Yet he questioned not it would revive again, and by such means as he or they could not imagine. _I hope and trust (said he) God will never let this nation fall again into Popery. _He declared also that he was perfectly satisfied with the Duke_s title to the crown, so that he was not afflicted on that account from having engaged in his cause. When the Jaylor spoke to him about knocking all his Irons, he said, _Great men of state wear chains, and _tis accounted their honour; but though there is great difference between their chains of gold and mine; yet I take mine to be more honourable:

Remarkable Providence

As the Apostle said he counted it an honour to suffer shame for his Master_s name, _The sledge being ready, they prepared to enter it; and now a very strange event occurred. The horses in the sledge would not stir, and when whipped, instead of going forward they went backward. This so enraged some persons that they took them out, and borrowed others from the coachman; but no sooner were they put to it than they broke the sledge to pieces. On this Colonel Holmes thus addressed their enemies, _Pray gentlemen, you see all your strivings will not do to draw us to execution. I verily believe there is more in it than you are aware of; pray read about the Prophet, that went out of God_s way, his beast saw that he could not. Give us leave, we will walk to the place._ (A Friend of the Author, who was born in Lyme, well recollects hearing the old people say, when he was young, that these horses belonged to a Mr. Jones the Commissioner of the Customs. He was a rich man and possessed twenty four good houses in the Town. His grand-daughter was known to the Author_s friend, and used to beg her bread in Lyme.) Coming to the place of execution, he declared his confidence that the cause for which they suffered would be promoted by other instruments, who would meet with better success. He then prayed for about half an hour, in a very pious devout manner. This is preserved in a work, entitled, _The Bloody Assizes._ And gives proof of his sentiments, and the happy state of his

mind. We give one extract, because of the remarkable answer that three years after was given to his Petitions. _In thy good time work a deliverance for poor England, let thy gospel yet flourish, hasten the downfall of Antichrist, we trust the time is come; prevent, O Lord, this effusion of christian blood; and if it be thy will _let this be the last._

Executed at Lyme

More than 130 years have elapsed since this period, nor has there been any blood spilt by popish malice in this happy country. The blood which flowed on account of Protestantism in what was called the Western Rebellion was *the last*.

After ending his prayer he embraced his fellow sufferers; took a solemn leave of them; encouraged them to hold out to the end, and not to waver. This, said he, is a glorious sunshining day, and I doubt not, though our breakfast be sharp and bitter, it will prepare us and make us meet for a comfortable supper with our God and Saviour, where all sin and suffering shall end. Turning to the Sheriff, he said, _you see I am imperfect, only one arm, I shall want assistance to help me upon this tragical stage._ The Executioner shortly after did his office. The account thus concludes. _Thus fell the valiant and good christian Col. Holmes; his dying words we have now found to come to pass, he was much lamented by all that saw him, except by some, that it is feared are delivered up to a scared conscience._

He had a Son who was a Captain in the Duke of Monmouth's Army, who fell victim to the same glorious cause.

The excellent Benjamim Keach, in his Poem entitled, _Distressed Zion Relieved,_ had thus expressed the lamentation of the church on account of the loss of these her favorite sons.

_Brave Colonel *Holmes*, wise, valiant, and sincere,

Who didst to Sion true affection bear,

Thy worthy name shall not forgotten be,

But shall recorded be in History

To after ages; nor can thy arrows

Be duly paid without a flood of tears.

Great Soul! Thy life thou seemedst to despise

Rather then ask it of thine Enemies.

Much less didst thou in any sort incline

Others to charge, to save that life of thine.
How didst thou grieve and publickly bewail
Thy undertaking should so strangely fail.
But yet prophetically didst divine
It would revive again in little time,
Though by what means it brought about should be.
It was impossible thou couldst then foresee,
And thy Prediction now is come to pass,
Though by thy foes it then contemned was.

And now the sad Spectators wondering saw,
The Horses long refuse the Sledge to draw;
The poor dumb Beasts by Heaven's Instinct are
Made sharp reprovers, while the lash they bear,
And seem to say, *These men are innocent,*
They must not die, God will not give consent
And therefore he doth strangely us restrain
From draning them, though lasht and lasht again.

What other voice there was I cannot see
In this amazing wonderous Prodigy,
Yet all these warnings from the Foe are hid,
For die they must, and die they also did.
Although on foot to slaughter they must drudge,
To gratify a most tyramic Judge.

Nor did the gallant Father fall alone,
He in the cause lost a religious Son.
Poor *Captain Holmes*, few young men like to thee,
Did hazard all to set their Country free
From *Rome's* curst yoke and cruel slavery.

(Distressed Zion, & c. p.25,26.Bloody Assizes, p. 170-173.

Mr. Phips

William Phips. When he settled with this Church does not appear. He was, however, the pastor in 1685. We find him attending the first meeting of the general Assembly in 1689, and it is supposed he finished his course about 1690.

Mr. Sampson

Richard Sampson. He is the first Baptist we have heard of who was educated at Bristol for the christian ministry. There had, however, been several previously educated for the ministry among the Baptists by the celebrated John Tombers, B. D. There were very many learned men at this period in the denomination, but they had been in general educated by others persons then Baptists, and were designed for churches of the other persuasions. The church at Plymouth, of which Mr. Sampson was a member, broke through the prejudices which unhappily existed against a learned ministry; and sent this young man to Bristol, to be placed under the tuition of Mr. Thomas, and ejected nonconformist Baptist minister, of whom it is said by Palmer V. iii. p. 177, that *he trained up many for the ministry.* Mr. Sampson had been some time at Bristol in 1689, when the general Assembly met in London. One of their resolutions on this ever memorable occasion was that they would apply the fund proposed to be raised, *To assist those members who shall be found in any of the aforesaid churches that are disposed for study, having an inviting gift, and are sound in fundamentals, in attaining to the knowledge of understanding of the languages, LATIN, GREEK, and HEBREW.* (Vol. I. p.492.)

A few months after, the church at Plymouth sent a remittance to their Trustees of the Fund of ?27:3:8, and the promise of nine pounds per annum, to be entirely disposed of in the education of young ministers. In this letter they requested, that Mr. Simpson might be permitted to remain two or three years longer with Mr. Thomas, and have the expenses of his board and education defrayed. This request being complied with, he remained at Bristol till 1692. In this year he removed to Exeter, and it is probable was soon ordained, as we find him attending the Assembly in London as their Minister in

1692. His labours in this city were so much blessed, that we are informed, the congregation flourished greatly, so that the meeting-house would not hold half the people who sometimes assembled.

Mr. Sampson appears, notwithstanding what is said by Mr. Thompson, to have been respectable for literary attainments; and especially for strength of memory. An anecdote on this subject is worth preserving. _Sir Isaac Newton had a great respect for Mr. Sampson, and on occasion spoke in high terms of the tenaciousness of his recollection._ The conversation turning upon the depriving good men again of their Bibles at the close of Queen Anne_s reign, Sir Isaac said, _They cannot possibly deprive Mr. Sampson of his, for he has it all treasured up within him._

During Mr. Sampson_s pastorate the people fitted up a larger place of worship in Gaudy_s Lane, about 1712. Mr. S. being seized with a Palsy which incapacitated him for preaching for two years, the people honourably supported him till his death, which happened in 1716, and afterwards provided for his widow for many years. They were at this time a very respectable Society in point of wealth; many persons of considerable property, and some large fortunes belonging to them.

It is mentioned at the beginning of this article that some of the first members of this church took refuge at Honiton Clift, a village about 8 miles from Exeter. But as there have been no baptists there since the Revolution, it is probable about that time they returned to Exeter. This Village is very distinguished in the history of the Baptists, because the best defense of the principles of Dissenters was here produced. Let it be recollected that here *Delaune wrote his Plea for the Nonconformists*. (Thompson_s MSS.) And let it never be forgotten that permitting this Champion to perish in Prison with his Wife and Children, when ?66:13:4, would have prevented it, is as indelible disgrace on the Dissenters of that period. (See Vol.I. p. 403)

Church at Dartmouth

Another of our Churches in this County, which is of early date, is that at Dartmouth. It is not improbable but this was founded by Mr. Paul Hobson. A letter preserved by Edwards (Gangræna.) is our authority for this remark. It is as follows.

_To his much honored Captain, Paul Hobson, at Mr. Carwithye_s house in Exon._

Dartmouth, June 12, 1646

_Endeared Sir,

My best respects and service to you be presented. That relation which formerly I had unto you, hath emboldened me to present unto you these rude lines. It doth not a little rejoice me, that providence hath so disposed of it, as to bring you down into this dark corner of the kingdom. It is my desire for you to the throne of grace, that God would cure that weakness under which your body hath so long travelled, and that he would give you

such strength and utterance of spirit, whereby you may be able to declare unto the world, the glory and the riches of the good news of Jesus Christ which he hath manifested to your soul. John says, _That which we have seen with out eyes, and our ears have heard, and our hands have handled of the word of life; that declare we unto you._ Such kind of preaching and declarations of Christ, from experience of it in the heart, the priests of England (but especially of these Western parts) are unacquainted withal. I should account it a happiness that I may have relation to you, as formerly. *That small remnant of the saints in this town* will be very joyful to see you here, and so shall he, who desires to be

Your servant in any office of love,

ROBERT CAREY.

Robert Stead. He was the pastor of the church at Dartmouth about the time of the Restoration, and had been for some considerable time before. (Thompson_s MSS) His name appears to the address, several times mentioned, entitle _Sighs of Sion._ It was doubtless to him Mr. Cheare refers when he says _St. is here at present, they there are yet preserved._ It is probable he left Dartmouth for London, where we find him co-pastor with the famous Hansard Knollys.

Philip Carey

Philip Carey. He was probably a relation of the preceding letter. He began his ministry about 1685. He attended the general Assemblies in London as the minister and messenger of the church at Dartmouth. We have scarcely any information respecting him. He however felt the weight of persecution, and was for a considerable time imprisoned for his nonconformity in Exeter goal. From this place he addressed some letters to his father, an Apothecary in Dartmouth, which we have not been able to procure. He died about 1710. He published a considerable piece on the subject of baptism; to which the excellent Mr. Flavel, the presbyterian minister in the same town wrote an answer; in which he speaks respectfully of Mr. Carey. This piece, of Mr. Carey_s, was so acceptable to his brethren, that the whole Assembly agreed to recommend it. It was advertised at the close of the letter in 1689m as follows, _A Solemn Call, unto all that would be owned as Christ_s faithful witnesses, speedily and seriously to attend unto the primitive purity of the gospel doctrine and worship; or a discourse concerning baptism. Wherein that of infants is disproved as having no footing at all in the word of God. By way of answer to the arguments made use of by Mr. William Allen, Mr. Sidenham, Mr. Baxter, Dr. Barthogge and others for the support of that practice. Wherein the Covenant made with Israel at Mount Sinai, *Ex. 20.* that in the land of Moab, *Deut. 29.* As also the Covenant made with Abraham, *Gen. 17:7, 8,9,* whereon so much stress is laid for the support of Infants_ baptism, are plainly proved to be no other than three several editions of the covenant of works; and consequently, that no just argument can thence be deduced for the justification of that practice. Together with a description of that truly evangelical Covenant God was pleased to make withbelieving Abraham, containing the sum of the everlasting Gospel then preached to him; since proclaimed by the Apostles; and which now remains to be

yet further published unto every nation, kindred, tongue, and people for the obedience of faith. By Philip Carey, a Lover of Truth and Peace. Price bound, 2 shillings._

Church at Tiverton

The church at Tiverton next claims our attention; and for the few particulars we possess we are indebted principally to the *_Memoirs of Tiverton,* by Mr. Martin Dunsford, printed in the year 1792.

_Baptist Meeting House.

The outworks of the fortifications of the Castle extended to the spot on which the present Meeting stands. On the ruins of these stood an old [meeting] house, supposed to have been opened for public worship in 1687.

_It appears by some private MSS. that at the early meetings of this sect (Mr. Dunford adds in a note, *_It was the peculiar misfortune of this sect, not only to have been obnoxious to the Episcopalians for their non-conformity, and to have suffered much on that account; but to have been injuriously treated by each of the other sects and partially represented on their writings._*), when the penal statutes for non-conformity were in being, the public service was seldom conducted by any particularly appointed minister, but by some of the elder members of the Society, till the liberty granted by King James's declaration; when we find:

_1687. Roger Holdenby appointed pastor, who came from Ireland, and appears to have been much esteemed. He officiated in the above old house about 2 years, when he went to Plymouth, and the service was again conducted by the elder members, and by:

_1690. Tristram Truvin, a poor Tradesman of Tiverton of reputable character. He generally officiated till the appointment of:

1691. Richard Tidmarsh, who came from Oxford, and was ordained pastor of the congregation in November this year. During his ministry many of the elders were appointed assistant preachers, particularly, 1704. Wm. Bower, a tradesman.

This account was chiefly derived from the present church book at Tiverton, which is thus entitled, *_A record or register of the Church of Christ in Tiverton, and of the affairs and proceedings thereof; since by the providence of God we have the enjoyment of liberty and peace in the year 1687, our former book containing matter of this nature being lost in the late times of trouble._*

The records commence with *_the names of the minister and members of the said congregation baptized into the faith of the gospel; beginning from the 20th day of the 12th month, the year aforesaid._* [1687.] The names of 118 members follow, and also that of the minister. This was Roger Holdenby, of whom we have already spoken in the account of the church at Plymouth. As the records of both churches state that Mr. Holdenby was

in Ireland when he was invited to become their Pastor; it should appear that he first served for a little time in the church at Tiverton, and then returned to Ireland. Admitting that he first settled at Tiverton at the beginning of the year 1687, as he was not invited to Plymouth till October 1688, this will agree with Mr. Dunsford's account, viz. that he was the Minister about two years.

Tristram Truvin

Tristan Truvin. We know nothing further of him than what is stated above, except reminding our readers that he is mentioned, Vol. I. p. 504, as a minister of the church at Tiverton at the general Assembly in 1689. Though _a poor tradesmen,_ yet as he was of _respectable character,_ the church sent him as their messenger in connections with John Ball, who it is probable was a Deacon.

Richard Tidmarsh. He was a minister of the church in the city of Oxford in 1689, and was its representative in the general Assembly. In November 1691 he was ordained to the pastoral office at Tiverton. This event is thus recorded. _The 12th of 9th month, 1691. The church assembled together. Brother Thomas Whinnell [of Taunton] being present, and according to gospel rule did solemnly ordain brother Richard Tidmarsh to the work of Eldership or Pastorship in relation to this church; which was done by prayer, with fasting and laying on of hands by brother Thomas Whinnell only. Brother Toby Wells [of Bridgewater] who was also desired to be present, being prevented by sickness of body._ We have no account of the period of the labours of Mr. Tidmarsh; but it should seem the church was very numerous, prosperous and happy, as it is said, _During his ministry many of the Elders were appointed assistant preachers._

Church at Bampton

From the church at Tiverton we pass to that of Bampton, _a Branch growing out of its roots,_ and formed into a separate church in 1690. The Tiverton records state, _Be it known that of the aforesaid members of this church, about the number of 40 persons having their habitations in and near Bampton, and being blest with gifts and abilities for exhortation and instruction, have for many years kept a constant public meeting with good success and unto God's glory, their own and others consolation, and withal continued as a branch of this congregation; we and they holding and maintaining our joint church-fellowship and communion together. But of late time our beloved brethren aforesaid having manifested their inclination to put themselves into a particular distinct church state. Accordingly, after some seasons of solemn seeking the lord and conference together about that affair, there was a church-meeting appointed to be at Bampton the 5th day of the 9th month, 1690, unto which were called for assistance the pastors of the church at Bristol, Exon, and Taunton. And then the matter was solemnly transacted, the members aforesaid being distinctly inchurched as under written._ Then followed 40 names.

_Memorandum. That at a church-meeting held at Bampton the 5th of the 9th month, 1690, it was then mutually agreed, by and with the consent of the church of Christ

baptized upon profession of faith meeting at Tiverton_That forasmuch as God by His merciful providence hath increased the number of members in and about Bampton to that degree that it is judged they may by the merciful providence of God be able to keep up a church state to the honour of God and their mutual edification; therefore we have fully consented and agreed that the members above named are a church of Christ, distinct from the congregation and church of Christ usually meeting at Tiverton. In the presence and be the advice of the Elders of other churches as above-said. viz. Tristram Truvin, Robert Stone, Thomas Dunsford. Andrew Gifford, and William Phips, Thomas Whinnell._

James White was the first Pastor of this church. He was settled among them in this office the first day of the 11th month, 1696. He left them the 24th of the 10th month, 1698. He was succeeded by James Murch in 1703.

The Church at Upottery

The Church which for several generations have worshipped God through Jesus Christ at Upottery, originally met at a place not far distant, called Luppit; but their persecutors found them out, and compelled them to fly and scatter; in which circumstances the vicinity of different parishes and counties was a great relief to them. Presently after, they began to collect again at a farm house in a wood, about a mile and a half from the present place of worship: _There is now_ (they say) _the stream of water behind the house, and in it remains to this hour, a dam and an oaken plug made by our fathers, and this is where they used to baptize at midnight those who had a mind to the cross of Christ. There were in those days men, who from their perseverance in pursuing, the quickness as it seemed, with which they found out their objects, and their having no mercy, used to be called *Bloodhounds*. Some of them after a while traced out the worshippers at the farm house in the wood, came unawares in upon them, seized some of them, and had them transported to Jamaica for 7 years; the rest fled and hid themselves. This was a terrible stroke, and we cannot find that they ventured to meet again all together, until king James II made his proclamation of liberty of conscience, when they soon assembled and immediately resolved upon building a house of worship. One of them, whose tombstone in the yard says he has been buried 130 years, because he could not then *give* them land to build on, sold the Society a good acre for 5 shillings. They built and worshipped in peace; they prospered and had 100 members, and but one so low in worldly circumstances as to be a day-labourer. The Society has passed through many difficulties and changes since, but in all, such protection has been afforded to it, that its existence has not been interrupted to the present time._ (Upottery Casc.Bap.Mag. vol. iv. p. 229.)

Persecution. Prosperity.

The following account is from Mr. Thompson_s MSS. _This church was formed in the year 1652. During the times of Persecution in the reigns of Charles II and James II the Baptists in and about Upottery assembled together in private houses and the woods. In the first year of its existence thirty four persons were baptized. In 1665 here was a place of worship built at Upottery, still known by the name of the *New House* in that parish.

The first pastor we have any account of was Mr. Thomas Collier. After him Mr. Thomas Halwell was much harassed by the conformist Minister of that place, who was a furious bigotted High-churchman._ It was to this church that the circular letter was addressed, by which the general Assembly was convened in 1689: a copy of which is given, vol. i. p. 478.

Mr. Thomas Collier

Thomas Collier. When he settled at Upottery we have no information; but he was a minister of considerable eminence among the Baptists, and according to Crosby, _a man of great moderation and usefulness, but who from preaching the gospel was attended with very severe trials._ The first account we have of him is that with many of his followers, he was expelled from the Island of Guernsey on account of his religious opinions, which, says Edwards in his Gangræna, _he could not deny when I asked him the question._ He appears to have been much employed in itinerating throughout Hampshire, and a great part of the West of England. In a letter sent to Edwards by a minister in the West, he is charged with being _the first who sowed the seeds of Arminianism in these parts._ He was once imprisoned at Portsmouth, but how long is not recorded. In 1645 he published a book, entitled, _Certain Queries,_ in which (says Edwards) _he makes baptizing the children of the faithful, not only to be vain, but evil and sinful._ _He is (says this abusive author) a Master-Sectary and a man of great power amongst them. He hath emissaries under him, whom he sends abroad and commands to several parts, as Syms, Rowe, &c. and supply his place in his absence. He hath done much hurt in Lymington, Hampton, Waltham, and all along this country._ To expose Mr. Collier, Edwards published in 1646, two intercepted letters; one of them written from Guilford and addressed to the Church at Taunton; the other to some of his friends, dated London May 2, 1646. We give this as a specimen of his spirit and zeal.

Letter of Mr. Collier.

_To the saints in the order and fellowship of the gospel.

My dear ones in the Lord Jesus, I salute you, desiring him who is our head and husband, our life and liberty, our all in all, to gather up our souls more abundantly into the glorious unity and fellowship of the Son of God; that you may not live upon these lower things, which are but instruments to convey light and love to us. I mean even ordinances, or the like; which, indeed, are but a shell without a kernel, further than we enjoy Christ in them. My dear ones, you are in my heart continually, and my desire is to be with you as soon as possible I can, to impart some spiritual gifts unto you, and to enjoy fellowship in Jesus Christ with you. But what is this? you are upon the heart of Christ; nay, engraven upon his hands, and shall be had in everlasting remembrance before him. I am much in haste at present, the post being coming forth of town, only I have sent you these few lines, and two books here inclosed, as a remembrance of my love. I desire to be remembered to all my dear friends with you, and at present rest and remain, Your dear brother,

In the faith and fellowship of the gospel,

London, May 2, 1646

THOMAS COLLIER

His Reply to Mr. Hall

It is probable Mr. Collier settled at Luppit and Upottery, soon after the formation of the church. Anthony Wood says, when speaking of him, _The said Collier was an husbandman, sometime teacher in the church at York, and in 1652 a teacher at Westbury in Somersetshire._ If this statement is correct, it should seem he had been a parish minister at York during the abolition of Episcopacy; but this does not agree with his being a *teacher* at Westbury in 1652, as a person of his character could not have been admitted to any of the churches in the establishment by the Assembly of Divines; and the *Triers* were not appointed till after this period. It is most likely that Wood has made a mistake respecting his being a minister at York.

In 1651 he published an octavo pamphlet of 164 pages entitled, _The Pulpit-guard routed in its strong holds. Or, a brief answer, to a large and lawless discourse, written by one Thomas Hall of Kings-Norton, entitled, the Pulpit guarded with twenty arguments, pretending to prove the unlawfulness and sinfulness of private men_s preaching. Wherein the arguments being weighed in the Balance of the Sanctuary, are found too light; and the lawfulness of private men_s preaching (as Thomas Hall calls them) viz. gifted Brethren, is cleared and confirmed in opposition to all gainsayers. My work in this treatise hath been, and is, 1. To rout him in all his guards; 2. To discover the weakness and invalidity of all his answers to those objections and allegations by him there produced for the preaching of the gifted brethren. His six arguments to prove their ministry free from Antichristianism, raised; and six more asserted; proving them to be Antichristian. By Thomas Collier._

Charged with Errors

This is a well written pamphlet, and proves the writer to have been a man of ability. We extract a small part as a specimen. Having brought the *False Prophet* to the Bar of the Lord Jesus Christ, he calls the witnesses, which are 1. The Scriptures, the Old and New Testaments; 2. Reformed Churches who walk suitable to the Scriptures; 3. Deluded Souls; 4. Public peace and weal of Nations. Christians churches say, _No sooner did we receive any of thy truth but he fell a quarrelling with us and inventing reproachful nick names for us, that so he might make us appear odious before the world, his deluded church. If we come to see into the freeness and fullness of thy grace, in justifying sinners, and saving of souls without any thing done by us; he immediately endeavours to reproach us with the odious name of Libertine; if we come to see into the Law of the gospel, which is a law of love, and that Christ is the Judge, King and Lawgiver to his saints, and that we have all the law in him, from him for righteousness and for rule, he then calleth us Antinomians; if we separated from the word in their Babylonish ways and worships according to thy will and command, he then branded us for Separatists; if we practiced baptism according to thy written word, he then called us anabaptists, &c._ The whole

trial is curious and the characters are well supported, but it is too long to give in our work.

The next year we find Mr. Hall published a quarto pamphlet in reply to Mr. Collier, entitled, *‘The Collier in his Colours, &c. wherein you have the filthy, false, heretical, and blasphemous tenets of one Collier an Arian, Arminian, Socinian, &c.’* We have perused Mr. Collier’s piece against Mr. Hall, and can see no cause for such heavy charges. He however held some erroneous tenets, at least, in the estimation of his brethren. Mr. Coxe published a treatise entitled, *The Confutation of the errors of Thomas Collier.* (Athæna. Oxon.) The celebrated Danil Dyke wrote a preface to this work, but we have not been able to discover what were the errors of which they complained. We have no account either of the time or place of Mr. Collier’s death. He published a Volume of Essays on various subjects.

Thomas Halwell. He succeeded Mr. Collier as pastor of the Church at Luppit. We find him attending the general Assembly both in 1689 and in 1692. We find Mr. Halwell attending the Western Association at Taunton the 17th of the 4th month, 1701. Also in 1705 at the same place, when he was appointed with several other Ministers to reconcile some unpleasant things which existed in the churches of Tiverton and Bampton, respecting some Robert Alliston, an irregular Itinerant Preacher, who is charged with being accessory to sow seeds of division, and to disturb the peace of those churches, and therefore they advise all the churches in the Association to regard the rule Romans 16:17. Mr. Halwell attended an Association at Taunton in April 1709, and another at the same place in 1711. He died about the year 1718 or 1720. (MSS/ Association Letters, and Thompson’s MSS.)

Church at South Malton

There was a Baptist Church at *South Molton* in 1689 and Thomas Stoneham attended as their Messenger at the general Assembly in that year. The congregation was very considerable about 1750. One of its first ministers was called Wright. When far advanced in life he went to America, in this same ship with the celebrated George Whitfield. This eminent man of God speaks of Mr. Wright in one of his journals with much respect. The Meeting-house fell into the hands of the Corporation about the year 1772, on the death of an old member of the church named Rowe. (Thompson’s MSS.)

Church at Bovey Tracey

Clement Jackson. He was a minister of the church at Bovey Tracey after the Revolution in 1681, and it is probable had been so for many years. He attended the general Assemblies in London as their Messenger in 1689, and 1692. This church is of early origin. In 1656 it pastor united in the address to the churches, entitled *‘Sighs for Sion, &c.’* See page 64. At this time it is probable Mr. Thomas Glasse was the pastor. Mr. Clement Jackson visited the suffering Abraham Cheare in Exeter goal in 1662. In a letter to his friend Mr. Punchard, Mr. Cheare says, *‘Clement J. was yesterday here with me, with whom I have been refreshed.’* It is not known when Mr. Jackson settled with the church at Bovey Tracey, but he seems to have attended the Western Association at

Taunton, 1705, as its Messenger. As this was upwards of 40 year after he visited Mr. Cheare he must have lived to a good old age. The following letter from one of his descendants, a Deacon of the Baptist Church at Old-ford, Middlesex, will furnish a lively instance of the care of God over his suffering servants.

_Bow, Middlesex, April 19th,
1813.

_Dear Sir,

Mr. Clement Jackson lived near the Cross Tree, at Moreton Hampstead, in Devonshire, about the year 1686; and was by trade a Baker as well as a Serge-maker. He was also, as you have already learned, a Baptist Minister. It is not known, however, whether he was an itinerant preacher, or whether he was settled over the Church at Bovey Tracey, of which Mr. Sprague is the present pastor.

Remarkable Providence

After Mr. Jackson had, for some time, eluded the vigilance of persons authorized to take into custody those who preached the gospel of Christ, he was apprehended, and committed to Exeter jail, where he remained for six months.

During the period of his imprisonment, his wife carried on the Serge-making trade; and was, by that means, enabled to provide for the family.

Being liberated at the expiration of the six months, and, in his return from jail, passing through St. Peter's churchyard, he was met by a person of respectable appearance, who inquired of him the way to the jail. Mr. Jackson gave him proper information; and, at the same time, asked whom he wished to see. The stranger replied that he wanted one Clement Jackson. Mr. Jackson immediately said that that was his name, and that he had just been liberated, and was returning to his family at Moreton Hampstead.

A conversation ensued, by which the stranger was perfectly convinced that Mr. Jackson was the very person he was going to see. The unknown person proceeded to say that he had come to give him a large order, which was to make as many Serges as he could, by a certain time, when the Serges would be called for, and the money paid. He said also that he had to present him with fifty pounds to begin with. Mr. Jackson made inquiries respecting his friend; but the persons replied that he was ordered not to tell who the friend was; but that he (Mr. Jackson) was to look to God.

Mr. Jackson went home, communicated this pleasing intelligence to his wife, and made the Serges. At the appointed time they were called for, their value paid, and a second order of a similar nature given. He could not find out his friend; but his business flourished more than ever; and he soon became a man of property.

This, Sir, is the account which had frequently been rehearsed to me by my mother, who was the grand-daughter of Mr. Clement Jackson.

I am, Your_s

&c.

JOSHUA

ROBINS.

Case of Discipline

At the Association above mentioned, in 1705, the following minute appears in relation to the church at Bovey Tracey, which perhaps may have been the business on which Mr. Jackson attended. We introduce it as a proof of the purity of discipline maintained by the Western Churches.

_In the case proposed by the church at Bovey Tracey, in answer to the first question, we determine that it hath been a great temptation upon the man to admit of any alienation of affection to his *espoused* wife, and that it is his duty to be humbled before the Lord for it, and watch against it for time to come, and use all means to increase his love, and speedily to perform his vows and enter into a marriage relation. In answer to the second question. That it_s the church_s duty to exclude him from the Lord_s Table for [the] present, and not to proceed farther against him till he hath rejected the church_s admonition, and not to receive him into communion till he hath given the church at Bovey full satisfaction._ (MS. Letters of the Western Association, of which the write has many in his possession, lent him by Mr. Tommas of Bristol.)

Western Associations

Mr. Jackson had a son of the name in the ministry, who attended the Associations at Taunton in 1707 and in 1709, his name is signed Clement Jackson, jun. He must have been the Minister or Pastor of one of the Western churches, it is most likely that of Bovey Tracey. We find his name to another letter from the churches assembled at Bampton, the 30th and 31st days of the 3rd month, 1716, when Junior is omitted.

The following Churches in this County belonged to the Western Association, viz, Collumpton, Bampton, Bovey Tracey, Dartmouth, Exeter, Loughwood, Plymouth, Upottery, and Tiverton. We may form an opinion of the state of the Churches, and the spirit and sentiments that prevailed at this period, from an Association letter printed Vol. I. p. 542_545.

Dorsetshire

The first Baptist minister we have any account of as preaching the gospel in this county, was Mr. Thomas Collier, mentioned in Devonshire; who in a letter addressed to his friends at Taunton, in 1645, says, _The Lord hath manifested his presence to me exceedingly in my journey; I desire the Lord to raise up your hearts in thankfulness, he hath gathered saints in *Pool* by me, fourteen took up the ordinance at once: there is like to be a great work._ From this statement it is probable a baptist church was at this time formed at Pool. We know nothing of any of its ministers. The meeting house stood without the Town with a burying ground attached to it. This was a good building and would contain about 400 people. It was standing till about twenty five years ago; when it was sold by Mr. Dearling of Chichester and Mr. Wornell of Downton, heirs to the only surviving trustees, and the money it obtained was divided between the general baptist churches of *Chichester*, *Downton*, and *Newport* in the Isle of Wright.

Baptist Churches

It was in this county the celebrated Francis Bampfield laboured for many years. He was ejected from Sherbourne by the Bartholomew Act in 1662, and afterwards committed to the county goal at Dorchester, where he continued a prisoner for eight years.

The following ministers were settled with Baptist Churches in this County.

JOHN MILLER,*Minthenton*

THOMAS COX,*Dorchester*

JAMES HITT,*Dalwood*

THOMAS PAYNE, ----

JAMES MURCH, ----

SAMPSON LARKE,*Lyme*

SIMON ORCHARD, ----

ROGER APPLIN,*Whitchurch*

John Miller. He is said to have been a person of great piety, worth, and usefulness, and descended from parents possessed of a plentiful estate. He was born at *Hinton-Marton* in this, county and educated by a presbyterian minister. Dissatisfied with the arguments for infant-baptism, after a diligent and impartial enquiry he embraced the principles of the Baptists. At *Minthenton*, the place where he resided, he became pastor of a church off this denomination.

Notwithstanding the severity with which all the Nonconformists were treated during the reign of Charles II he traveled from place to place, preaching in the most public manner. His labours were so remarkably owned of God that he became the instrument of gathering and planting several churches. His sufferings on account of his principles as a baptist and nonconformist were very great. It is said he lay ten years in prison, it is likely in Dorchester Jail, and very narrowly escaped a *premunire*.

Severe Persecution

In the year 1683, when the penal statutes against the Dissenters were executed with great severity, a distress was laid upon his goods upon the *three-week* act. At the summer assizes held at Sherbourn he was indicted for eleven months nonconformity. There being but one witness against him he could not have been convicted, had not a Justice of the peace, rather than lose their prey, sworn to the indictment. Mr. Miller

pleaded in his own defense, that contrary to the laws of England, he had suffered in two courts for the same offence. Notwithstanding this was not contradicted, he was fined *two hundred and twenty pounds*, and was told by the Judge, he might seek recompense where he could.

The ensuing Michaelmas the under sheriff, with four or five bailiffs, took possession of his assets, seized 400 sheep, about 20 cows, and younger beasts; 7 horses, 6 fatting hogs; all the hay, corn, and wool of a year's growth; nay even the very malt and hops, made for the use of the family, and sold it for the use of the king. Thus for about four months was this good man's property ravaged and destroyed; nor could Mr. Miller appear, as the Justice of the peace before mentioned, who was his prosecutor, determined to imprison him again. His eldest son, who had taken account of the goods sold, was obliged to fly, as a warrant was issued against him. At length two of his neighbors, one of whom was a churchman, seeing such desolation, went to the sheriff and paid his demand. Returning they dismissed the merciless bailiffs who had taken and wasted between four and five hundred pounds. While they were spoiling and robbing him, Mr. Miller went to London, and presented a petition to the king, not to obtain the restoration of his goods; but to intreat that the little which was left of his corn might not be sold, and that his eight children might not want bread, as the bailiffs would not suffer them to have it without money. All the answer he could get from the king was, *"I have nothing to say to you, go home and conform."* Finding he could obtain no redress he returned and sold his estate, and retiring to a lonesome place, rented a small farm about 30 pounds a year, where he lived quietly the rest of his days.

Singular Dispute

When liberty of conscience was granted by the declaration of James II he had several disputes with clergymen of the established church. The most remarkable was with a Dr. Beach and four others, before a large concourse of people; the time and place appointed having been previously published in three market-towns.

The clergymen had undertaken to prove their *baptism, church* and *ministry* were according to the scriptures; and that Mr. Miller and his people were *schismatics*. They began first on the subject of baptism. Crosby says, on the authority of a manuscript in his possession, that the Doctor ingenuously confessed it was a very difficult point, and declined entering upon the other subjects. After this they parted in the most friendly manner, the clergymen assuring him they would never dispute with the Baptists again. We know not in what place Mr. Miller ended his days. He died May 14, 1694. As he did not attend the meetings of the general Assembly, it is likely he was of the *General Baptist* denomination. We know nothing of the *several churches* founded by his labours.

Church at Dalwood

Thomas Cox. He attended the meetings of the general Assembly 1689 and 1692 as the minister of the church at Dorchester. When the church at this place was founded, and how long it continued we have no information.

James Hitt. He attended the general Assembly in 1689 both as a messenger from the church at Plymouth, and a preacher from the church at Dalwood, in this county. The

Meeting-house stood on the borders of the county, adjoining Devonshire, and seems to have been supplied principally from Plymouth with ministers. Mr Hitt at the time he preached at Dalwood was chosen by the church at Plymouth to administer the ordinance of baptism in the absence of Mr. Buttall.

Thomas Payne. We know nothing of him except that he attended the meetings of the general Assembly in London, as the preacher of the church at Dalwood in 1689, and as its minister in 1692. From this latter circumstance it should seem he was for a little time settled here.

James Murch. He was a member of the church at Plymouth, and had probably been called to the ministry by them. He occasionally assisted Mr. Buttall. After preaching at times both at Dalwood and Lyme, he was requested to remove to the former place; he applied to the church at Plymouth for his dismissal in 1693, which was refused till the 16th of the 10th month 1698, when it appears from the records of the church that he and his wife were dismissed to Dalwood. It is probable he continued here but for a few years; in the year 1700 his name is signed to an Association letter sent from Bristol. See Vol I p 545. He removed afterwards into Devonshire, and was ordained pastor of the church at Bampton the 3rd day of the 4th month 1703. He died here Dec. 7, 1724.

Effects of Monmouth's Defeat

Sampson Larke. He was pastor of the church at Lyme when the Duke of Monmouth landed there in 1685, and shared the fate of many other excellent men on the failure of the expedition. It is not known when he settled at Lyme, it is probable soon after the Restoration in 1660. He is mentioned Vol. 1 p 237, as a member and probably a minister of the church at the Glass-house in London in 1648. When he removed to Lyme does not appear; but it is evident from his history, that he had long been employed as a Minister of Christ in that town, before the tragical event cost him and many other zealous Protestants, their lives and estates. The following account of him is extracted from the work entitled, *The Western Martyrology; or the Bloody Assizes.* He was an eminently pious man and had lived in Lyme, where he suffered execution, many years. He was well acquainted with many people in the Town; and all who knew him valued him on account of his humility and circumspection. He was one of the twelve persons brought from Dorchester whom the horses refused to draw, as is mentioned in the account of Colonel Holmes. Immediately after the Colonel's execution Mr. Larke was commanded to prepare himself to follow. Many persons belonging to his congregation being present, he had begun to address them from a passage of scripture which he had named.

Happy Death

He was, however, interrupted, being told that as it was late, and so many to be executed after him, there would be no time; he suddenly concluded saying, *“I will speak a few words to him who I am sure will hear me.”* He then prayed with great humility and fervency; the following is an extract from his prayer which was written down by one present. *“Look in mercy, O Lord, on this poor Nation, especially on this Town and every particular person in it. Let them all mind those things which make for their peace before they are hid from their eyes. Comfort my dear and distressed wife; be a husband to her;*

deliver her out of the paw of the Lion, and the paws of the Bear. Look upon all thy poor afflicted ones, all prisoners and captives, work deliverance for them if thou seest it good; but thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven. And now, Lord, with humble meekness and submission I submit to thy will, depending upon the merits of my Saviour, to whom with thy blessed self, and Spirit, be ascribed all honour and praise both now and for ever. Amen. _Taking leave of his fellow-sufferers, he ascended the ladder. From hence he saw some of his friends and neighbours weeping and mourning for him, to whom he said, _Pray weep not for me, I am going to a place of bliss and happiness. Pray do not weep for me: but return to your houses and before you get up yonder hill I shall be with my heavenly Father in fulness of joy, enjoying pleasure for evermore. I doubt not but I shall be happy with God my Saviour where all tears shall be wiped away and nothing shall remain but Hallelujahs to all eternity. _He then addressed his enemies, and advised them to give up those cruel sentiments they had entertained of him, and conversed in a heavenly manner with his friends. He was then turned off the ladder, to the great grief of the good people of the Town, especially those of his own congregation.

Dying Epistle

_To give him nothing but his due (says the writer) he was a man mighty charitable, relieving and visiting the poor and needy. He preached in season and out of season, and made it his business to go about doing good, and to put poor souls in the way to eternal life. He was an old christian as well as aged in years. He was a general loss especially to his dear wife. _

The following letter was written by him to a friend just before his execution.

_My dear Friend.

_I am ready to be offered and the time of my departure is at hand. I have through grace fought a good fight; have finished my course; have kept the faith; and am in hopes of the crown of righteousness prepared for me and all God's faithful ones. The experience I have had of the promises, hath given me comfortable hopes that he will carry me to the full end of my journey, with his name, and that truth of his, which I have made profession of. My great crime is my being a Preacher of the gospel, and here I am to be made a sacrifice, where I have mostly preached Christ's gospel. I think my Judges have devised this punishment for my hurt, but I trust God will turn it to my good. The great trouble I have is for those good hearts that I must leave behind me; but this is my comfort, knowing that all such as fear God he will be a father to them. My dear wife is greatly troubled, but through mercy much supported, and something quieted. If any of you have opportunity to give her help, I hope you will do it. As for our confessing ourselves guilty, it was expressly as to matter of fact, and not of form; and this I did with some freedom, and the rather, because all my worthy brethren that went before me took that way. And though many ways have been used to have a further discovery, yet nothing of that kind [has been made] by any, but Captain Jones. Since our sentence, some wretched men have been with us to draw from us a confession of our being rebels, that we might have their absolution. I bless God, he hath hitherto helped me to be faithful, and I hope he will not leave me in the most needful time. I must conclude, being ready to be called away. My dear love to all my christian friends, and especially those in the jail. The Lord be with you all, Amen.

Your dying friend in hopes of eternal life through Jesus Christ. Amen.

SAMPSON LARKE

From the house of my blessed Bondage

In Dorchester, September 7, 1685

(Western Bloody Assizes, p 173, 176-179)

Character of Mr. Larke

After his execution he was quartered and beheaded, and his head placed on a pole upon the Custom house. His character and usefulness is thus described by the excellent Benjamin Keach. (Distressed Sion Relieved, p 26, 27)

The next Great Worthy _mongst the vanquished Host.
Which in that hour of darkness I have lost,
A preacher was, indu_d with Holy Art,
Who did dissolve the Stone in many a Heart,
His name was *Lark*; O come my Children now,
Pay him those tears which he laid out for you;
Ah! must he fall by Fate? Ah! Must he yield
His Life up too? But why not in the Field?
Must *Sampson* fall by the *Philistines*_ hand
Who from their bondage strove to save the Land?
Well! By thy death thou hast prevailed so,
Thou hastenedst their utter overthrow,
And yet I cannot but lament to think
Of what a bitter Cup thy Flock do drink.
My loss of thee is more than loss of Ten,
Though they might be sober Religious men;
When Death thus with his hands lays hold upon,
The Pillars of the House, the Building_s gone,
Unless God in his Mercy instantly
Raise others up their places to supply:
But Ah! How many dye? How few appear
Them to succeed, and their great weight to bear.
In Jesus Christ_s own Harvest in this Nation,
(Which now seems white) there_s cause of Lamentation.
A Chariot and an Horseman I have lost,
But he_s above incamp't i_th_ Heavenly Host.
Have you not seen an early rising *Lark*
Mounting aloft, making the Sun her mark?
Lo here_s a *Lark* that soar_d up higher, higher,
Till he had sung himself into Henv_n_s Quire.
From Earth to Heaven he went, and in a trice
His Soul ascended into Paradise.

Mr. Orchard succeeds him.

Simon Orchard. There is no doubt but he succeeded Mr. Larke; and thus _God in his mercy instantly raised another up to supply his place._Mr. Orchard attended the meetings of the general Assembly, as the messenger of the church at Lyme, in 1689 and 1692. We have no account when he ended his labours.

Roger Applin. Crosby only says respecting him, _of Ellerton, and pastor of the Baptist church at Whitchurch in the county of Dorset. A man of good parts and a holy life, who had his cattle taken away and sold on account of his Nonconformity.

DURHAM

From the list of the general Assemblies in London it appears there was one church in this county which sent as its Messengers Mr. John Ward, and Mr. Henry Blackett, they were both ministers, but we have no information respecting them.

Essex

Public Dispute

From some circumstances mentioned in the first Volume it appears that the itinerating labours of the baptist ministers in London, were frequent in this county, and that the opposition which was made to them was very great. Of this the treatment of Mr. Samuel Oates, in 1646, Vol. 1 furnishes abundant proof. We find that prior to this, there had been a public dispute at *Tarling* on the subject of baptism, January 11, 1643, between Mr. John Stalham, Mr. Newton, and Mr. Gray, on the side of the Paedobaptists, and Mr. John Batty, and Mr. Thomas Lamb. This latter person was a native of Colchester, and had been a great sufferer under the tyrannical reign of Archbishop Laud. After the period of the public dispute at Tarling he went into the army.

It is supposed that a church was collected at Barking, as it is said in the account of Mr. Benjamin Keach that he assisted in getting a meeting-house erected for the worship of God at Barking; we have no account of the name of the minister nor of any particulars respecting the church. The only ministers we have heard of in this county are Mr. Wm Collins, pastor of a church at Hadfield Braddock, and who attended the general Assemblies in London. In 1698 a Mr. John Hammond attended the Assembly as pastor of the church at Colchester. Besides these is mentioned Mr. Wm. Woodward, of whom we know but little.

Church in Harlow

William Woodward. Crosby only says, that _after his ejectment, he was pastor of a small congregation at Harlow, but he was the pastor of the church there in 1689, and in 1692. In both these years he attended the meetings of the general Assembly, and was accompanied in 1689 by a Mr. James Newton, who, it is probable, was not a minister.

Gloucestershire

There were several ministers of the Baptist Denomination in this County who had been ejected from parish-livings after the restoration in 1662. These are mentioned Vol. I p 328, and will occur again in the course of our history. (As the Churches at Bristol are in the lists of the general Assembly placed in *Somersetshire*, we shall defer their history to that county.)

JOHN MAYS, *Morton-in-Marsh*

JOHN MANN,-----

JOB GREENING,-----

ANTHONY FREEMAN,-----

GILES WATKINS, *Cirencester*,

JOSHUA HEAD, Bourton.

PAUL FREWEN, *Kempley*.

THOMAS PAXFORD, *Bourton*

ANTHONY PALMER, M.A.-----

-----*COLLET*,-----

-----*COULINGS*,-----

THOMAS JENNINGS, Brimsfield

WILLIAM HANKINS, *Dimmock*.

ROBERT WILLIAMS, Nimpsfield

ELEAZER HERRINGE, *Tewsbury*

Singular Escape

The first church mentioned in the list of the general Assemblies is Morton-in-marsh. This society is of early origin. There is an account of an Association of Baptist Churches held here on June 26, 1665, when John Mays, and John Mann signed the circular letter as the ministers of Morton. In 1689 it is said John Goring was the pastor, and in 1692 John Greening, but this it appears is a mistake in both instances, as a correspondent says, _In 1690 I find *Job Greening* was the Pastor, and Anthony Freeman

the Messenger. Mr. Greening lived at Bourton-on-the Hill, about a mile from Morton, where he preached; as also at Stow-in-the-Wold. There is a traditionary report in the neighbourhood, that one Lord's day as Mr. G. was returning home from Stow he met some informers who were going to Stow in search of him. Not knowing Mr. G. they asked him _if he knew whether Greening was at Stow or not?_ Mr. G. answered, _He was there when I was in the place._ They accordingly went on in the pursuit, and Mr. G. escaped their hands. I conclude he was a plain honest man in business. He sometimes preached at Bengeworth. He had been in America in his younger days, and died in 1738._

Anthony Freeman. He was a mercer, and it is supposed was a man of property. Many persons of his name among the Baptists still reside in the county.

Church at Civenchester

About a century since the Church removed its meetings from Morton to Stow; and about 80 years the Meeting-house at Morton has been gone to ruin. (Letter from Mr. E. Smith of Blockley, dated July 6, 1810.)

Giles Watkins. He was the pastor of the church at Cirencester founded about 1651. A letter from Mr. Wilkins, dated Bourton, July 5, 1810, contains the following particulars. _He was a respectable tradesman in the wool, or woollen trade, and one of the chief founders of the small Baptist Church in Cirencester, which met in his house, the very spot where they now meet, as the premises have by him, and his successors, been gradually appropriated and accommodated to this sole purpose. He was, I believe, the first pastor of a church which has continued from his day to this, in nearly a similar state; small, fluctuating and creditable; but rarely exceeding the number of members of which it originally consisted at its first formation, viz. About 40. Attendants have however of late years considerably increased. Mr. Watkins was succeeded by Mr. Wm. Freeman who was also a respectable tradesman: both these ministers were my ancestors, and I am happy to say, the Wilkinses, the Watkinses, and the Freemans have been the main support, and with their connections constituted the bulk of the congregation and Church of Baptists in Cirencester from its first formation._

Church at Bourton.

Joshua Head. Dr. Calamy says, _he was ejected from some place in the county of Gloucester, and afterwards preached to a people at Bourton-on-the-water, was an Anabaptist, but a worthy man._ This excellent man was greatly persecuted, and from some traditions in the family, we learn, that he was a very zealous and indefatigable minister of Jesus Christ. An old gentleman who was born at Bourton, knew a son of Mr. Head, who died about 60 years since, and has informed the writer that he is of opinion Mr. Head was the first baptist minister at Bourton; that he lived at lower Slaughter where he had a good estate. There are some of his descendants of the same name at present, reputable members of the church at Bradford, Somerset.

Paul Frewen. Dr. Calamy in his usual stile calls him an Anabaptist, and says he was ejected from Kempley. He acknowledges, however, that he was a good preacher, and a very popular man. After his ejection he was the minister of a congregation at Warwick.

Thomas Paxford. He was ejected from Clapton near Bourton. The following is the account given of him by Dr. Calamy. _Though he was not bred a scholar, yet he had good natural parts, and preached and prayed well, and sometimes officiated for Mr. Palmer at Bourton-upon-the-water. After his ejection, he became an Anabaptist; and fell under some censures as to his morals; which I the rather take notice of, because of an intimation of Dr. Walker_s, as if some of the ejected were therefore passed by, because they were such as partiality itself could not speak well of._ Mr. Palmer, after mentioning the above adds, _Crosby has nothing more than this quotation from Calamy, except abuse of the Author for relating this last circumstance, which he does not attempt to disprove._

Ejected Minister.

It is a little singular that both these respectable writers should labour to fix an odium upon the character of Mr. Paxford without assigning any proof upon which the charge was founded. Crosby says, that _it is not candid by *innendo* to impeach the character of any person; that Dr. Calamy was under no necessity to repel Dr. Walker_s intimation by an instance from among the Baptists, as he might, had he pleased, have found many among his own denomination much more to his purpose._ Desirous of ascertaining the proof of the assertion of Dr. Calamy, the old gentleman mentioned above, was asked by the writer whether he had ever heard, when Mr. Paxford_s name was mentioned, any stigma cast upon his memory. His answer was that he had never heard any ill report of him. This is not decisive proof that Dr. Calmy_s assertion is not true; bit it is some evidence that whatever Mr. Paxford_s misconduct might have been, time would have obliterated its remembrance, had not this writer perpetuated the circumstance by a mere assertion destitute of evidence. Mr. Paxford had a son a Physician who was buried in the Meeting-house at Bourton.

Anthony Palmer, M.A.. This gentleman was ejected from Bourton on-the-Water, and was afterwards pastor of the Baptist church. The following account is from the *Nonconformist Memorial*, Vol. II p 231. _Educated in Oxford, and some time fellow of Baliol College. Born in Worcestershire. He was forced out by some of the neighbouring gentry, before the act of uniformity was framed. He put in a curate, who also was disturbed for disusing the Common Prayer. He had a congregation afterward in London, and exercised his ministry there till his death on January 26, 1678.

Character of Mr. Palmer

He possessed good ministerial abilities, and was one of the congregational persuasion._ This last remark is no proof that he was not of the Baptist denomination, as the same may

be said of Bunyan and many others. It does not appear at what time he left Bourton for London, nor with what congregation in the city he was settled. He was, it is evident, a person of considerable learning, and of deserved reputation.

Atkyns, in History of Gloucestershire, says, _1649, Anthony Palmer, Rector of this place, was a great instrument in ejecting loyal and orthodox ministers, and after the restoration of Charles II he engaged in all rebellious plots. But *Bigland* in his Collections (though he carefully omits the puritanical preachers, putting asterisks instead of their names) has the following noble testimony in Mr. Palmer's favour. _1649, Anthony Palmer, M.A. appointed by the Parliament: was born at great Cumberton, county of Warwick, admitted Fellow of Baliol College, 1640. He is portrayed by the severe pencil of A. Wood, with the strongest traits of party zeal, being appointed a Commissioner for ejecting scandalous ministers by the parliament, and adopting their virulent and unprincipled measure. His writings were frequent in support of his religious tenets and party. *The gospel new creature*, which was published in 1658, is the most approved of his productions. The high esteem in which his memory is held by his followers, compensates for the extreme severity with which the Royalists have marked his character. It may be candid to determine from such opposite descriptions, that he was a man of strong parts, enterprising and undaunted in the prosecution of what he thought his duty; and it is but just to allow, that no part of his private life could justify the suspicion of his integrity. (Works: A Scripture Rail for the Lord's Table; against Mr. J. Humphrey's Treatise of Free Admission; - Memorials of Godliness and Christianity; - The Christian's Freedom by Christ; - The Gospel New Creature. We have heard of another, but have not seen it entitled, The tempestuous soul calmed by Jesus Christ.)

Awful Providence

In Mr. Jessey's _Lord's Loud Call, the following remarkable account is given of two ministers members of this church. _At a meeting at Brokington in Gloucestershire where many met, June 3, 1660. B. Collet and B. Collings, gifted brethren, from Bourton-on-the-water, and divers others thence, and from Stow, and other places. It was rumoured about that some of the country troop would then come and sieze upon them, and imprison some, and rout them all. The Clerk's daughter came with her mother, who had opposed and reviled them, uttering hard speeches against them, and their meetings and their ways; and these two stood by in a corner. When they came B. Collet was speaking upon *Jude* 14, 15, with much affection, *Behold the Lord cometh, &c.* While he was speaking from these words, the hand of the Lord of Hosts went out against that daughter, as it appeared; for she gave a sudden great shriek, and fell down dead before them all. Those that were about her rubbed and chafed her for her restoring, but there was no appearance of life at all. B. Collet was much affected with this hand of the Lord, and looked pale, being of a very tender spirit. B. Collings seeing it, was about to seek the Lord for raising her up again; but her mother being much out of patience, hindered their prayers for her, and she never recovered.

Complain of Mr. Palmer

As some were carrying her out, Mr. H.--- met them who had led that party of the troop; and he came in, and would have them away prisoners, and he charged them with being the death of the maid, that they had killed her. B. Collings answered to this effect, _Nay, we have not killed her, but the Most High hath done it, in whose hand is both your breath and ours._ After he had pulled the speakers towards the door, and spoke more to them, he and the soldiers left them. _The place where this happened is about ten miles from Bourton. It is said Mr. Collet used to preach in Bury-fields. He had a good estate called Nethercott farm. His son was Mayor of Coventry, and lies buried with his father in Bourton Meeting. There was an old meeting-house at Brokington, which was taken down about forty years since.

Thomas Jennings. _He was ejected from Brimsfield. He signed the testimony of the ministers in this county, as minister at Matson. He was a moderate anabaptist. _Mr. Palmer mentions a sarcastic stroke of Crosby upon Dr. Calamy for having called Mr. Jennings a *moderate* anabaptist. The reader should know that he only says _ the Doctor is very free with his epithets when speaking of the Baptists: but I do not once find him distinguishing any of his own sect in this manner and it is well known that many of them could not with justice be so distinguished._

William Hankins. He attended the meetings of the general Assembly as the pastor of the church of Dimmock; and also the Assembly which met at Bristol in 1693.

Eleazer Herring. We know but little of Mr. Herring, except that he was the pastor of the church at Tewksbury. It is probable he was its founder, and preached there till his death. The following is the Epitaph on his Tomb, in the Burying Ground of the Baptist meeting, Tewsbury.

Mr. Eleazer Herring. V.D.M. died 27th April 1694

Mary his Wife, 17th October 1690

Eleazer, their Son, 18th June 1695

Anna Flower, their daughter, 20th July 1760, aged 74

The memory of the Just is blessed.

Hertfordshire

Origin of Dissent

The seeds of Puritanism, Independency and Baptism were very early sown in this County, and the produce speedily discovered. The bitter presbyterian Edwards, in his *Gangraena*, part III. P 81, published 1646, says, _there are four famous preachers in

Hertfordshire (as I have it from sure hands) one Hoath the Collar-maker of Watton, one Rice the Tinker of Aston, one Field the Bodies-maker of Hertford, one Crew the Taylor of Stevenage; and besides these, there are some other preachers who sometime were Ministers in the church of England, but now great sectaries. As Master Feake, at All-saints church in Hertford, one Master Harrison about Saint Albans side, and some others of whose strange preaching practices, of the complaint to the Judges at the Assize of Master Feake, &c. I shall hereafter in a fourth part of Gangraena, or some other Tractate about the sects, give the reader an account. _Edwards fulfils his promise, p 147, respecting Mr. Feake._ As for his carriage at Hartford where he hath preached since last January, it hath been as follows.

In Hertfordshire

His preaching and praying shews him no friend to the Assembly nor Directory: he hath never used the Lord_s prayer since he came there, but hath preached against the use of it as a prayer. _Tis observed of him by understanding men his auditors, that they never heard him appoint or sing a Psalm, he reads but one chapter, or a piece of a chapter; *he hath not baptized any since his coming*: one of the Committee, a Justice of the Peace, put up some articles against him at the Assizes at Hartford to both Judges then on the bench. The first was that Christ would destroy not only unlawful, but lawful government, not only the abuse but the use of it; and as he had begun to destroy it in England, so would he by raising combustions in the bowels of France, and Spain; and that he would destroy aristocracy in Holland for tolerating Arminianism. When he denied the words, one being present and asked, affirmed him to have preached thus; and there are four others, understanding men, and of good worth will testify the same. Then Master Feake explained himself before the Judges that there was in Monarchy and Aristocracy an enmity against Christ which he would destroy; and as he was speaking, some turbulent fellows and sectaries clambered up by the bench and cried out, my Lord, my Lord, Mr. Pr. doth it in malice, we will maintain our minister with our blood; thereupon the Judge threw away the paper and said he would hear no more of it._

In another part, p 105, he speaks of _one Hick at Chesham or thereabout, _, and says _There is one *Carter*, having but one eye, a sectary at Watton, and a great preacher, who keeps convenacles on the Lord_s day, there being great resort to him, never coming to the public assemblies._

Affecting Occurance

These extracts are introduced for the purpose of tracing to their origin those societies of christians in Hertfordshire which were neither Presbyterian nor Episcopalian in their constitution; but Independent, or, as they were generally denominated that period, *_gathered churches_*. From the exertions of these men so severely stigmatized by Edwards as sectaries, and troublers of churches, there is no doubt but the baptist churches owe their origin, an account of which we present to the reader.

In the letter of Captain Deane, addressed to Dr. Barlow, printed in Vol. 1 p 294, the writer mentions, among those of his acquaintance who voluntarily left their parochial charges and benefices, _Mr. Daniel Dyke, and some others, in or near Hertfordshire. _Mr. Dyke was the Rector of Great Hadham. We have already mentioned him Vol. I, p 229, as one of the Triers of parochial ministers, appointed by Oliver Cromwell, to whom he was Chaplain. We shall notice him again in the account of London Ministers. Mr. Henry Denne was the Rector of Pyrton in this county for ten years, but embracing the sentiments of the Baptists relinquished his living about 1640. Some account of him is given Vol. I, p 166-198, and also under the article Cambridgeshire.

We cannot commence the history of our churches in this county, without feeling and expressing deep regret, that our materials are so scanty, owing to a circumstance which must be ever deplored.

The Church at Kensworth was of very early origin, and its transactions were recorded with great accuracy, till the records amounted to four folio Volumes. These, at length were in possession of a deacon of the church, who proved so notoriously vile, that notwithstanding he was of great property, the church determined to exclude him from their communion. This so enraged him that he declared they should never have the church books, and removing to London, he took them with him, where it is probable they were irrecoverably lost.

Church at Kensworth.

It is a little consolation that in the year 1675, some extracts were made from these volumes into a book small enough to carry in the pocket, to use at the different places where they held their church meetings, at the time of persecution. This book now belongs to the church at St. Albans a branch, or probably the remains, of the original church at Kensworth. On the first leaf of this book is written as follows, _The names of the respective members of the baptized congregation of the church at Kensworth, taken 9th day of July 1675, and registered upon the 22nd day of March, 1675, by me Hugh Smyth. _Its being *registered*, doubtless refers to the larger records, of which we have already spoken.

At this period referred to, July 9, 1675, there were entered by Mr. Smyth the names of 390 members, residing at the following different places. viz. St. Albans, Mims, and Ridge, Redbourne, Hampstead, Steedham, Kensworth, Wheathampstead, Codicote, Preston, Kimpton, Welwyn, Chalgrave, Sundon, Berkhamstead, Leighton, Houghton Regis, Brickhill, Edlesborough, Luton, Tuddington, Wellen, Gadsden, Taterhoe, Harpendeu, Sandridge, Shendley, Hempstead, Charlton, Eaton, Illworth, and Dunstable.

The ministers in this county whose names have come to our knowledge are the following.

THOMAS HAYWARD, *Kenworth*.

DANIEL FINCH, -----

JAMES HARDINGE, -----

THOMAS MAARSOM,-----

-----BRITAINE, -----

HUGH SMYTH, *St. Albans*

SAMUEL EWER, *Hemel Hempstead*

JOSEPH MAISTERS, *Theobalds.*

JOHN WILSON, *Hitchin*

RICHARD SUTTON, *Tring.*

Has Several Pastors

Thomas Hayward. He was the pastor of the church at Kensworth in 1676. How long he had sustained the office we have no information. He is the first person recorded among the inhabitants of St. Albans in 1675. When his death is mentioned in Nov. 1688, it is said, *He was a laborious servant of Christ.*

We know nothing more of this person. Mr. Palmer in the *Nonconformist Memorial*, Vol. II p 100, mentions a Mr. Hayward ejected from some place unknown in Dorsetshire, but has no account concerning him. As the Act of Uniformity passed 13 years before we find Mr. Hayward at St. Albans, it is a possible case that the unsettled state of the times may have driven him to this place of labour. This is conjecture; but seems to be supported by the consideration, that godly men who had been so devoted to the cause of Christ as to leave their livings rather than violate the rights of conscience, would possess sufficient zeal to embrace any situation which offered to preach the gospel of salvation to perishing sinners. If Mr. Hayward preached the word and administered the ordinances at all the places where the members of this numerous and widely scattered church resided; which he probably did, as it does not appear that there was any co-pastor, we need not wonder that he should be designated by his weeping friends, *a labourious servant of Christ.*

At the death of this excellent man, it is said, *The church called to the office of Elders, or co-pastors, brother Finch, brother Marsom, and brother Hardinge, to break bread, and the administration of other ordinances.* Of the others we proceed to give what little information we have been able to collect.

Minister Maintained

Daniel Finch. He was a preaching member of the church at Kensworth for several years before he was chosen one of its pastors. It should seem there was some difference between him and a female member of the church in 1681_2. The following minute respecting it stands recorded. "the church agreeth, that the determination of the friends at large around, as to the difference between B. Finch, and S. Wheatley shall stand as published in the church by B. Hayward, yet he and she shall take their places, and he go out to preach._ What this matter was is not mentioned; but it is certain it did not affect his reputation. He was called to the office of Elder in 1688, and the next year attended the general meeting in London, where his name appears to several of the resolutions of the Assembly as minister of the church at Kensworth. He attended also in the year 1692. He very soon after finished his course. At a church meeting, May 18, 1694, the records relate to the death of *_our dear brother Finch.* This testimony as the unanimous expression of a church of Christ, may be considered as the highest eulogy of departed worth.`

Ordination of Mr. Hardinge.

James Hardinge. He was chosen to the office of Elder at the same time as Mr. Finch. He had been previously a deacon of the church. As the fire of persecution was now extinguished, and the church could assemble without fear of molestation, they determined to give a minister maintenance, that he might be at liberty to visit all the places connected with the church. Mr. Hardinge was fixed on for this office, and his willingness to devote himself wholly to the work of the ministry is particularly noticed in the records, viz. *_Brother Hardinge, aforesaid, did accept of the office of Eldership aforesaid and did break bread with the church, January, 1688._*

Mr. Hardinge attended the general Assemblies with Mr. Finch. After whose death, and the removal of Mr. Marsom, the records state, May 18, 1694, that *_Brother H. being left alone in the office of Elder, he did desire some brother, or brethren, as the church should think fit, should be chosen to assist him, because the largeness of the congregation, and the great distance of meeting, caused the work to lay heavy upon him. The church did appoint a yearly meeting of the whole church to come together at the house of brother Warner, at Market Street, and they did elect and charge our brother Britaine to assist brother Hardinge in breaking of bread and in the administration of ordinances in any part of this congregation._*

This is a valuable document, as it serves to shew how richly this church was endowed with spiritual gifts. Mr. Hardinge's request supposes that a brother, or even brethren, might be found among them suitable for the pastoral office. At a yearly meeting the church proceed not only to elect, but to *charge* one of their number to *break bread* and *administer* ordinances. We learn from this that the manner of ordination was very simple among them; the suffrages of the whole church being taken, the person elected, if he accepted the office, was immediately set apart to the pastoral employment by themselves, without foreign aid or assistance. We learn also that the *_breaking of bread_*

was always performed by an *ordained minister*, and not by any other officer of the church.

His Death

What a blessing to a church of Christ when all its members are _subject one to another._ When even _the spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets._ And when all are willing to _abide in the several stations in which they are called._

It is probable that Mr. Britaine continued in this office about seven years. Whether he was removed by death or otherwise, is not recorded. He had, however, ceased to be an Elder at the close of the year 1713. The following article is the foundation of this conclusion. _January 1, 1713. At a meeting of the church at St. Albans to consider of the state of the church. The church did unanimously chuse brother Smyth, junior, to be their pastor, equal with brother Hardinge, but it must have been before 1733; when it is said, _July 1, 1733, At a church meeting, at the meeting-house in St. Albans, the church did unanimously agree to chuse brother Ewer to be their pastor equal in all things with brother Smyth, relating to the pastoral office, and did then chuse him to the pastoral office desiring him to accept the same._ It should seem that Mr. Hardinge laboured to a good old age, as he was chosen Elder in 1688, more than fifty years before his place was probably supplied by Mr. Ewer.

Hugh Smyth. He was doubtless the son of the writer of the church book from being designated, juniour. His parents lived at St. Albans, and appear to have been persons of note in the church. Many of their church-meetings, it is said, were held in the house of _Sister Smith._ In Mr. Smyth's time, it should seem that the church of Kensworth had become extinct. He died in 1750, having been Pastor 27 years.

Church at St. Albans

After his death a new list of members was made out, June 2, 1750, entitled, _The names of the baptized church meeting at St. Albans, late under the care of our honoured and well beloved Mr. Hugh Smyth._ This list consists of 35 members.

Mr. Smyth was probably succeeded by Mr. Ewer.

Mr. Bennett was chosen pastor October 4, 1752. He resigned his office February 3, 1757, when he raised the church at Chenies, and died in 1761. The late Mr. John Gill was ordained at St. Albans, June 7, 1758.

Many circumstances contributed towards the dissolution of the ancient church at Kensworth, which is only a small village situated a few miles from St. Albans, from Hemle Hemstead, and from Luton. After the Revolution, when the people could meet to worship God without fear, they gradually began to form churches more convenient for their assembling, and where their families could meet with them. As they appear, also, to have had several pastors, and ministering brethren, these were chosen to superintend

particular congregations in the places of their residence. Thus Mr. Marsom became the pastor of a church at Luton, a branch of the church of Kensworth, and Mr. Samuel Ewer of another at Hemstead, and a *meeting house* was now built at St. Albans.

Before we leave this church, we remark that from the few documents which are preserved, it appears to have been, from the purity and zeal of its members, _a city set upon a hill,_ and the light of that part of the world when darkness and dissipation abounded in the nation. Great numbers were doubtless brought to a knowledge of the truth by the faithful preaching of its pastors and ministers; who were baptized on the profession of their faith, and who lived to the glory of God.

Instances of Discipline

It is not known where they baptized, but it is supposed it was at Titahanger Green, as a person, Mary Young, who, it is said, belonged to the Presbyterians, was baptized at the house of Sister Dellamore at this place. A few extracts from these records, as they shew the strictness of the discipline of our churches in the time of persecution, may not be unacceptable nor unprofitable to the reader.

1678. Brother Osman recorded an inhabitant of Wheathampstead, was by his month of harvest, where he did very shamefully with others betray his trust, and left his work, his master not being there, and went to an Ale-house where he spent most part of the day, in sinning against God, and spending his money which should relieve his family unto excessive drinking. He being a servant at a brother's house, the said brother could do no less than declare it to the church, though to his great trouble, from which the church did withdraw from him, and he yet lieth under admonition.

March 1678. Brother Osman, recorded of Wheathamstead, aforesaid, did the presence of the congregation, publicly declare his fall, acknowledge his sin, and manifest great trouble to the same: desired again to return to his place. The church gladly embraced him again, believing that God had given him repentance to the acknowledgement of the truth; he was admitted to his membership.

_August 1680. Sister Searly, recorded an inhabitant of Preston, was by the church accused as to matter of fact. In the first place she selling strong water let a person drink to excess; and 2. Did give herself in marriage to a wicked drunkard, contrary to the rule of our Lord, who saith, _Let her marry to whom she will, only in the Lord._ 3. And was married in the national way with common prayer, with all the Romish ceremonies to it. All these things being considered, the church did think it their duty to withdraw their communion, and yet she lieth under admonition._

Church at Hernel Hempstead

Taking leave of this church, we proceed to mention that at Hernel Hempstead whose founder, and first pastor, we suppose was,

Samuel Ewer. When the people here separated from Kensworth we have no account; probably about the period of the Revolution, as we find Mr. Ewer attending the general Assemblies in London, both in 1689, and 1692. His name is signed to the _confession of faith, _ and several resolutions. Crosby says, _He was a generous worthy man, well beloved and respected by his people. _He died in 1708, and his funeral sermon was preached by Mr. John Piggot of London, December 24, 1708, from *Eccles. ix. 5. For the living know that they must die.* Mr. Piggot in giving his character designates him _an excellent minister of the gospel, _ and adds, _He was justly esteemed by all men of probity and good sense, who had the advantage of his acquaintance: for if one consider the Reverend Mr. Ewer in any relation while living, he was very desirable.

_He has distinguished himself for several years as an exemplary christian, whose piety towards God, and affability towards men, have recommended him to the esteem and approbation of all; *being a pattern to the believers in word, in conversation, and charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity.* He was a *Nathaniel*, an *Israelite* indeed, one who could not stoop to the little arts and disguises by which some people make their way in the world.

Character of Mr. Ewer

_He had a prudent and regular zeal for the glory of God, and the salvation of souls. He ever expressed a just indignation against sin, and pressed after the greatest degrees of holiness. He kept clear from the extremes of superstition and enthusiasm, believing that substantial religion did consist in a conformity to the moral perfections of the Godhead. His moderation was remarkable and extensive, he followed the things which made for peace, and diffused the grateful odours of charity wherever he came. He was patient and submissive under the various trials and afflictions, to which he was exposed through the course of his life.

_And if we consider him in his public character as a Divine, he was well qualified with useful learning and ministerial gifts: a man *vigilant, sober, and of good behaviour; given to hospitality, apt to teach; not given to wine, no striker, not greedy of filthy lucre, but patient: not a brawler, having his children in subjection with all gravity.* _And as this minister of Christ had a peculiar aptness to teach, so he was unwearied in his Master_s work; having the glory of God, and the interest of souls constantly at heart. The zeal of God_s house had eaten him up; he was constantly seeking of you and not yours: *He coveted no man_s gold or silver;* it was not the prospect of earthly gain, but the love of souls that engaged him in the ministerial work. He did forego that which he might have demanded, I mean the maintenance of himself and family: For no man is obliged to go a warfare at his own charge; and the Apostle says, *that Christ hath ordained that he that preaches the gospel should live of the gospel.* Yet you are witnesses for your deceased pastor, that he always generously gave his labours; and yet that did not cause him to take less pains in the promoting of your salvation.

Character of Mr. Ewer. (cont)

But he studied diligently to show himself approved, a workman who needed not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth; and constantly, in the course of his ministry (as I am informed by those who attended it) he did insist upon the great and substantial truths contained in the Christian Revelation.

_If the sermons of your deceased pastor had not all the embellishments of language which some boast of, they had this peculiar advantage, to be full of solid Divinity; which, I think, is a much better character for a pulpit discourse, that to say it is full of pompous eloquence and flights of wit. The praise of this useful minister is in all the churches, where the knowledge of him hath reached. Here, indeed he lived, here he constantly preached; and I believe you will all own, that his life was an excellent sermon: for in that you may see the practicalness, and usefulness of relative duties. In him you might behold the manly tenderness of a loving husband, the melting compassion of a kind father, the generous freedom of a true friend, and the admirable qualifications of a faithful pastor. How did he exhort and reprove, and rebuke with all long-suffering and doctrine; meekly instructing those who opposed themselves! Did he not warn every man, night and day beseeching them with tears?

_This did he fulfil his ministry, having obtained mercy of the Lord to be faithful; always desiring that Christ might be magnified in his body, whether in life or death. For he accounted not his life dear to himself, so that he might finish his course with joy, and the ministry which he had received of the Lord Jesus Christ, to testify the gospel of the grace of God.

Character of Mr. Ewer (cont)

_As to his particular behaviour during his last sickness, I am told by those who were nigh him, that he did not pass the time of his illness without some violent assaults from Satan: but it pleased the Lord to afford him speedy relief, and to make him more than a conqueror, when he considered his interest in the everlasting Covenant which is ordered in all things and sure. He had not only good hope through grace: but before he left this world he expressed his satisfaction and joy, *that all his sins were pardoned, and that, that God whom he had served in the gospel would never leave him nor forsake him.*

_His indisposition was but short; he was well and dead within the compass of seven days. He did not apprehend that he should die of his illness, till about two days before his death. His pain was so great that he feared to discourse but little; and when he drew near his end, he was sometimes delirious. Yet when he had the least interval, he expressed a very great concern for the church under his care, which he had fed and governed agreeably to the divine word. But he has done sowing in the church militant, and is gone to reap the fruit of his labours in the church triumphant. He is entered into that rest which remains for the people of God: he is fallen asleep in Jesus, having fought a good fight, and finished his course and kept the faith. Death has closed his eyes and sealed up his lips till the first resurrection.

Mr. Ewer left a widow and children who were affectionately addressed by Mr. Piggott at the close of his sermon. Some of his descendants are still remaining in the neighbourhood of Hampstead, and a great grandson is now a deacon of the church in Eagle Street, London.

Mr. Ewer, it appears, was a man of some learning. He wrote a reply to Mr. Edward Hitchin's book, entitled, *the Infant's cause pleased, cleared, and vindicated*. He appears to have died just as he had finished the manuscript. It was, however, published after his death, and we have not heard it was ever answered.

His Defence of Baptism

An Address to the reader prefixed, is signed by *Thomas Marsom, James Hardinge, John Ward, Matthew Dutton*. The character these persons gave him fully corroborates the highly finished portrait of Mr. Piggott, as they conclude by saying, "His name and memory will be deservedly precious in the churches of Christ, not only in this but succeeding ages."

We could willingly give large extracts from this very masterly performance, but content ourselves by giving the opinion of Mr. Thomas Davye of Leicester, in his "Treatise of Baptism" printed September 1788. Speaking of the Paedobaptist argument derived from circumcision, he says, "Those who would wish to see more of what is said upon this argument, I refer to Mr. Ewer's answer to Mr. Hitchin's book, which argument is everlastingly shattered and refuted: and I must confess is done the best that I have seen of late in this kind and our dissenting brethren can never possibly get over it." This work was translated into the Welch language, by the Rev. Joshua Thomas of Leominster, who wrote a preface to it, highly extolling, and warmly recommending it. The occasion of its translation was, that Mr. Hitchin's book had been published in the Welch language. The Translators in their address to the reader having said, that till this was done Welch Paedobaptists had no arguments by which to oppose their opponents. Mr. Thomas shrewdly replied, that this declaration was a tacit acknowledgement that they were convinced the New Testament was not sufficient for the purpose.

Mr. Maisters refused his degree.

The church at Hempstead still exists and is under the care at present of Mr. Liddon.

We next notice the church at Theobalds, which had for its founder, and for many years its faithful pastor,

Josheph Maisters. If this excellent man Mr. Palmer says, Vol I p 246, "He was born in Kingsdown near Ilchester, in Somerset, Nov. 13, 1640. He went to Magdalen College 1656, and was under the tuition of Dr. Goodwin, and there continued; till, upon the restoration, the Commissioners were sent to the University. The ceremonies of the church of England, being brought into that, as well as the other colleges, he removed to

Magdalen Hall; and at the time standing for his degree of B.A. it was denied him purely because of non-conformity; for there are extant some certificates of his diligence, piety, and learning. In this respect he was one of the first sufferers. After such usage he had little heart to stay any longer at the University, and therefore quitted it, and followed his studies in private, preaching occasionally as he had opportunity._

The certificates referred to are published in *_Calamy's Continuation._* For the purpose, says the Doctor, that the reader may make his own remarks on the treatment he had received._ They are as follows-

Testimonies to his learning

_These are to certify whom it may concern, that Joseph Maisters, student of Magdalen Hall, lately of Magdalen College, in Oxon, during his abode in the said University, did behave himself piously, and studiously; and was forced to leave his place in the said College; as also, was denied his degree of *bachelor of arts* having completed his time, and performed all exercise thereto required by the statutes) only upon this reason; viz. For his *non-conformity* to the ecclesiastical discipline lately introduced into the said college. In testimony whereof we subscribe our names.

HENRY WILKINSON, D.D.

I am persuaded that Mr. Maisters, in respect to his life and learning is without exception: and I have attested it before by my own hand, in the register of the congregation, that his presentation was unduly denied, after his grace was by me pronounced granted, merely upon the pretence of *non-conformity*: so that the said Mr. Maister (in my opinion) hath a good right to challenge a presentation to his degree, if it please the Vice-chancellor to admit him thereunto.

Ita testor.

THO. TANNER, Acad. Proc.

_We whose names are underwrit, can testify the truth of the aforesaid certificate, and proctor's subscription.

JOHN WILLIAMS, (then) Dean.

EDWARD NORTHMORE, reg. mag

Present at that congregation. EDMUND MAJOR, reg. mag

Present at that congregation THOMAS GALE, A.M.

_These are to certify, whom it may concern, that we whose names are here subscribed, having personal knowledge of Joseph Maisters, do testify, that he hath

behaved himself studiously, piously, and deservingly, during his residence at the University._

HENRY HICKMAN, R.D.

GEORGE COWPER, A.M.

JOHN BRITE, A.M.

His Character.

From this specimen of the spirit manifested by the Episcopalians immediately after the Restoration, and before their order was legally restored, it is not to be wondered at that the Act of Uniformity the next year should be procured and rigorously enforced by them.

Mr. Maister continued to preach occasionally among the Dissenters till he settled at Theobalds, being ordained Oct. 30, 1667. He continued here about 25 years, and then accepted an invitation to become the pastor of a baptist church in London, meeting in Joiner_s Hall. His church in the country being reduced to a very small number, they met in the Presbyterian meeting-house, the ministers of the two congregations dividing the work between them. As he was not willing to desert his little flock, it was agreed upon his removal that they should join the church at Joiner_s Hall, and he went down once a month to administer the Lord_s supper to them in the country. In this connection he continued til his death, which happened April 6th, 1717, in the 77th year of his age. He was interred in Bunhill-fields, and his funeral sermon preached by Mr. (afterwards Dr.) Jeremiah Hunt, from *Prov 14:32*.

The following character of Mr. Maisters is copied from a late writer. _In early life he became the subject of those religious impressions which had a happy influence upon his conduct in more advanced years. The force of his principles enabled him, at a critical period, to relinquish a station which promised considerable profit and applause. His good natural abilities qualified him for extensive service; and he was blessed with a native modest and mildness of temper which were improved by care, and heightened by religion. His fancy was clear and lively, and continued with him to an age, when usually it takes its flight; and he regulated it with so much judgement, as not to outrun correctness of thought.

Happy Death

His memory was so strong that, though he lived to an advanced age, any abatement of it was scarcely discernable. He was a very plain, serious, and judicious preacher; in doctrinal sentiments a professed Calvinist; and though he never used a pompous style, or fervent delivery, yet his preaching was generally acceptable, and admired by many serious and judicious christians of different persuasions. He wrote down in his study the chief part of his discourses, which he committed to memory; and as it was very retentive,

he forbore the use of notes. As a christian he maintained an unblemished character; was mild and gentle, temperate and humble, to a degree not commonly attained. His candour was remarkable; and his love extended to all who bore the image of God, however they differed from him in opinion. In a work (adds Dr. Hunt) he was so happy to pass a life of almost seventy years without a blemish. Blessed saint! Uncommon instance! Worthy our imitation! So beautiful even is this imperfect sketch of an amiable life.

His death was equally remarkable: when he had faithfully served the Lord above fifty years, a few months before his death he fell under a decay of nature, without any considerable sense of pain, or uneasiness of sickness. When I paid him a visit (says Dr. Hunt) three days before his decease he appeared perfectly serene and calm. The hope he expressed of future happiness, was not the rapturous assurance of some christians of less extent of thought; the humble and knowing saint owning his many imperfections, had recourse to the merits and intercession of his Lord. When I was going to take my leave of him, he took me by the hand, and gave me a steady and piercing look which had in it a mixture of concern; I am so weak (says he) that I cannot now so well prey in my family; the good man thought it strange that the intercourse he had maintained with God in his family so many years, should be interrupted, little thinking his kind Father would so soon turn his prayer into praise. The manner of his dying was such as literally agreed to the account scripture gives of the departure of real christians, *Falling asleep in Jesus.*

Church at Hitchin.

He never published any thing, though he was earnestly solicited to do it by his friends. There were two manuscripts found among his papers, one a *Paraphrase, with practical observations on the parable of the prodigal son.* The other *Advice to young people;* in several discourses on Ps. 119:9. It is supposed he wrote these chiefly for the use of his own children, and we believe that though it was much wished they might be published after his death, that the request was not complied with. We have not been able to ascertain at what period Mr. Maisters became a baptist. The church at Theobalds is mentioned in the letters of the general Assembly in London, and his name is signed as Pastor. A Joseph Seward attended him as a messenger to the Assembly, but he probably was not a minister.

We next notice the church at Hitchin whose first pastor was,

John Wilson. It is supposed that the baptist church at Hitchin was founded by the celebrated John Bunyan. He preached much in these parts, particularly at Preston, a village about three miles from the town, where there is a pit in the middle of a wood in which the meetings were held, Mr. Bunyan standing in it, and the congregation about the sloping sides.

Bunyan's Pulpit

A chimney corner at a house in the same wood is still looked upon with veneration, as being the place of his refreshment. About five miles from Hitchin was a famous Puritan

preaching place called Bendish. In this was a large square pulpit, and adjoining to it a high pew, in which ministers sat out of sight of informers. There was a door at which, in case of any disturbance they rushed out into an adjoining lane. (This place had been a Malthouse, was very low, and thatched, and ran in two directions, the pulpit being in the angle. It being very much decayed in 1787, it was determined to remove the meeting to Coleman Green about a mile off. The pulpit being the only one (as was supposed) of Mr. Bunyan's, was carried to the new place. There is, however, a pulpit in London in which John Bunyan used to preach. It is in Jewin Street meeting, and when the old place was taken down, the pulpit was preserved on that account.) It is not known exactly at what period the church at Hitchin was founded, but it is probable, as early, if not before, the Restoration in 1660. This was intended to encourage the church to receive a Mr. Waite. (Mr. Waite, it is supposed, was a Paedobaptist minister, who had preached much amongst them. In 1681 he was a minister in London and published the *_Child's Primmer and Mether's looking Glass._* 8vo. Mr. Sutcliff says, he was some time at Olney, Bucks., but at what period he cannot tell.) and Mr. Bear, who had been on some account cast out of the church at Cambridge, of which the famous Mr. Holcroft was pastor. This affair much displeased the other churches; and that of Bedford had a serious controversy with Mr. Holcroft's people on account of it. As the letter referred to is signed by the name of the excellent and learned Dr. Owen, and contains much christian sentiment, we give it for the gratification of our readers.

Letter of Dr. Owen.

_Brethren beloved in the Lord,

Grace and Peace by unto you from God our Father and our Lord Jesus Christ. We give thanks unto God for you all, understanding the word of the kingdom is come unto you, not in work only, but in power and the Holy Ghost, and that ye are become followers of the Lord in *this day of affliction, and of the patience of Jesus Christ*, and we trust your faith shall grow, and the love of every one of you towards each other shall abound more and more. As for the persons (Mr. Beare and Mr. Waite) *whom you write about*, we are willing at your desire to let you know, that upon hearing what the Brethren (sent up to us from that church whereof Mr. Holcroft is Pastor) had to produce from the Records they kept of their proceedings to cast out Mr. Beare first, and Mr. Waite afterwards, we did unanimously judge, that the church (for ought appeared to us) had not sufficient ground for their proceedings against them as they did. And our advice to them was, that they would again receive them into fellowship: nor do we therefore know any rule of the gospel that will be infringed by your continuing to honour Mr. Waite for his work's sake, or by your encouraging him in his labour in the Lord. We rejoice in that blessed success that the Lord hath crowned his ministry withal amongst you, for your building up.

Letter Continues

We are sorry to hear that any brother or brethren of that church in Cambridgeshire, before spoken of, should go about to weaken his hands, or to work a prejudice to his ministry, by giving an unjust, and wrong, and untrue, account of our judgement in Mr. Beare's and

his case. That letter of ours they have in their hands, does plainly shew what our sentiments were, and what we judge (and we humbly believe we have the mind of Christ in that we did judge.) was regular and meet for them to do for the repairing the honour of Christ, and for the obtaining of a blessing to themselves, as also for the healing of that scandal, that hath come upon the way of the gospel, by the precipitant and undue casting out of persons out of the visible kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ, and we are not without our hopes, but that the God of the Spirits of all flesh will keep them to look upon the counsel we have given them as upon an ordinance of Christ, which they ought to have reverence for.

—As touching *those five of your number*, that dissent and separate themselves from your body, our present advice is that you would be much in prayer from them, carry it in all love, with tenderness towards them and patiently wait, if peradventure God will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth. We account that they are overtaken in a fault, in this present *continued separation* of theirs, but we also desire you would (and we hope you will) shew yourselves so spiritual, as to seek the restoring of them in no other way than the spirit of meekness, considering yourselves lest ye also be tempted, and remembering that ye must bear the burdens of one another, and so fulfil the law of Christ. Finally, brethren, be perfect, be of good comfort, be of one mind, live in peace, and the God of love and peace be with you all, according to the prayer of your brethren and companions *in tribulation*, and in the kingdom and patience of our Lord Jesus Christ. Signed in the name, and by the appointment of several Elders of churches walking in and about London.

London,

JOHN OWEN

The 18th of the third month, 1669

GEORGE GRIFITH

Mr. Wilson dismissed from Bedford

The church appears from this letter to have endured much persecution. Tradition says, that an old building near the Independent meeting, originally erected for a Brewer's Storehouse, was used as a receptacle of dissenter's goods; where they were kept till there was a sufficient quantity collected to make a sale.

It should seem that as yet they had no pastor, but we find that on the 28th of the first month, 1673, an application was made to the church at Bedford —to give up to them their brother Nehemiah Coxe, in order to the exercise of an Elder or pastor among them.—It is added —which request the congregation concluded to take into consideration.—This, however, it does not appear they complied with, for on the 10th of the 2nd month, 1674, the records add, —The congregation at Hitchin intreated that the church would consent to give up our brother John Wilson to them, to be chosen to office by them.—

It was not till nearly three years afterward that Mr. Wilson was permitted to go, when he was dismissed by the following letter,

_The church of Christ, in and about Bedford, to the church of Christ in and about Hitchin, sendeth greeting.

Differences

_Holy and beloved,

_We the fellow heirs with you of the grace of life, having taken your earnest desires concerning our giving up to you, our beloved brother John Wilson into serious consideration, with much prayer to God for direction in so weighty a matter, have at last (God having bowed the heart of the church to consent to what you have longed, and as we trust much prayed for) granted, and by these lines do grant, and give up our beloved brother to fellowship with you, for your mutual edification and joy of Faith. We need not, as some other commend him to you, God having before prevented that *by commending him to you himself*. Now God and our Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ that great shepherd of the sheep make this both our, and your beloved brother, a double blessing unto you both in his ministry and membership with you, and also as a watchman over you, if God and the church with you shall call him thereto. Amen.

Written for you, by the consent of the church, and subscribed in their names by your brethren.

John Bunyan,	John Croker,	Thomas Cooper,
Samuel Fenn,	Thomas Honylove,	William Man,
John Fenn,	Thomas Woodward,	Robert Holstock,
Luke Astwood,	John Bardolph,	Anthony Harrington,
Oliver Scott,	Edward Shephard,	The first month, 1677.

The matter before mentioned laid a foundation for some unpleasant feeling between the congregations of Hitchin and Cambridge. The people at Hitchin, however, seemed desirous of promoting a reconciliation by the following letter which is supposed to refer to one of the five persons to whom Dr. Owen's letter related, and who were disaffected on account of the principles of the Baptists.

_The church of Christ in and about Hitchin, unto the church of Christ in and about Cambridge, sendeth greeting.

Letters Thereupon.

_Beloved in the Lord,

_The church of Christ here, though conscious to herself, that she walketh after the faith and charity commanded in the gospel; yet do grant and conclude for love_s sake, that our brother George Wilkinson, who desiring to be dismissed to you upon some scruples of conscience, with reference to some things amongst us (which yet we account *good and godly*) we therefore do dismiss him unto you for his better edification, desiring he may be a blessing unto you, and you to him._

Written by the order of the congregation, and subscribed at their appointment, by the brethren whose names are underwritten.

John Wilson,	Joseph Foster,	
John Foster,	Henry Shephard,	Dated the 1 st day of
Edward Hunt,	Michael Foster, &c.	the 11 th month, 1667.

On the 24th day of May, 1678, Mr. Holcroft and the brethren being assembled together at Hitchin, the church sent them the following letter.

_Honoured brethren,

Grace be with you. We have (as some of you know) often signified our desire of reconciliation with you our brethren, and do by these lines signify to you the same thing again; for it is not according to our principles (which are principles of peace) to do any thing to maintain differences among brethren. Wherefore if you be willing to give us a meeting, that if possible we may come together to peace, we whose hands are hereunder subscribed, do signify that we shall heartily embrace it, and to that end do propose to you to meet you now, either at Henry Warner_s, John Symson_s, or Dr. Hutchinson_s. May signify your minds in this matter by the bearer hereof. Farewell. Your brethren,

John Wilson	George Dore,
Ralph Rigg,	Henry Shepherd.
John Foskett,	John Knott,
	William Fowler.

Mr. Wilson_s ordination.

Betwixt the times of sending these letters Mr. Wilson had been ordained. This affair is thus related. _In the 4th month [June] 1667, the first day of the month, the church being then assembled together at brother John Foster_s, brother John Wilson gave in his answer to the call which the church before had given him to the office of a pastor to serve the church in that relation, as God should help him, which he accepted before the

congregation._It is further stated, _The 28th day of the 4th month, the congregation set that day apart in prayer to God, and brother Wilson was *further set apart* to the office of pastor over the congregation. There being present brother Anthony Palmer, brother John James, and brother Thomas Kelsey, of London, and brother Samuel Fenn of Bedford._

This account of the ordination of Mr. Wilson, differing as to the manner from the practice of the church at Kensworth, in the ordination of Mr. Britaine; proves that there was no uniform plan of conducting it. It appears probable that when they could conveniently, they invited the Elders of other churches to assist in the service, and to recognize the union, as has been, and still is, the practice of our churches.

Church Covenant

As yet the church had no regular place of meeting, nor probably till some years afterwards. We find them meeting together at Preston, October 22, 1680. At this meeting it was agreed _that John Thorowgood, a member of the church at Pirton, should be requested to preach unto them sometimes on Sacrament days, and when they should *set up again, or appoint a Text in meeting on the week day, either once a week or once a fortnight*. And this without the consent of Pirton church._ This resolution, as we suppose, being afterward considered disorderly as it respected Mr. Thorowgood, they resolved at another meeting to send two brethren to request him of the church; whether it was granted or not is not said.

It appears to have been common for the churches then as with some at present, to have *covenants*, to which every person subscribed as the condition of membership. This was the case with this church, as we are informed that on October, 25, 1681, _The church being met together at Hitchin, at brother Thomas Field_s house, and so fully that very few were absent, did then renew their covenant to the Lord, and one to another, with fasting and prayer, not contradicting, but by silence and lifting up their hands declared their freeness and heartiness therein.

_The Covenant is as followeth and thus propounded:

We who through the mercy of God, and our Lord Jesus Christ, have obtained grace to give ourselves to the Lord, and one to another by the will of God to have communion one with another as saints in our gospel fellowship. Do, before God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ, and the holy Angels, agree and promise, all of us (the Lord assisting) to walk together in this our gospel communion and fellowship, as a church of Jesus Christ in love to the Lord, and one to another, and endeavour to yield sincere and hearty obedience to the laws, ordinances and appointments of our Lord and Lawgiver in his church.

Procure a place for worship

And also do agree and promise (the Lord assisting) to follow after the things which make for peace, and things whereby the one may edify another: that so living and walking together in peace, the God of Love and Peace may be with us.

Amen.

To which we had the universal consent and Amen of all._

When it is recollected what severe measures were adopted at this period to prevent the assembling of the non-conformists, it affords us a strong proof of their zeal and piety in this resolving, whatever it may cost them, to cleave to each other, and to the Lord with purpose of heart. Such a solemn covenanting too with fasting and prayer, and lifting up the hand to the God of heaven, adding to the recited agreement: their loud and hearty Amen, must have had a wonderful tendency to preserve them from backsliding and apostacy, and to excite them to _hold fast the profession of their faith without wavering._

In 1687 the declaration of indulgence being published, they procured a place for public worship, and in May, this year, we find that the five members who had left them to join the church in Cambridgeshire, and who had been by that church dismissed to the church in and about Hartford, belonging to Mr. Hayworth, made a proposal to them. _That Mr. Hayworth with them might have the use of *our Barn*, there to meet one Lord_s day in a fortnight, three weeks or month._ It is added, _and this they said was propounded by them for love and peace sake, also being sensible that to set up *another meeting* by themselves would look ill, and be a means of giving occasion for reproach, and might be to the dishonour of God._

Meeting House Built

The church_s answer to this proposal was as follows, June 1687. _We do for love and peace sake grant that Mr. Hayworth, with you, may meet in *our Barn* at Hitchin one Lord_s day in a month, there to supply both parts of that day, as it used to be, that there be no disappointment then. This is our mind, hoping and concluding that he with you, will endeavour the things that make for peace, and if ever we shall find just cause to alter our minds, we will let you know it, and as for week days Mr. Hayworth may come freely as he used to do, and when he pleases._

When the general Assembly met in 1689, a copy of their letters was sent addressed to Mr. Wilson and the church at Hitchin. This church, however, is not mentioned in the list of churches, which is supposed to be on account of its being a mixed communion church, as was remarked respecting those of Bedford and Luton.

About May 1692 the meeting house was begun to be built. There was collected towards this in London £100:7:6, and in the Country £86:0:6. The whole expense of building, sinking the well, the baptistery, ground, &c. amounted to £208:6:3 ½.

In 1697 Mr. Ebenezer Wilson, was invited to assist his father in the ministry, and in June 1702, a second invitation was sent him to Bristol, when he answered _that he concluded to fix with the people where he was._ This was at the Pithay meeting. In the account of which, and of the London ministers, we shall give some further account of him.

Mr. Needham &c.

Mr. Wilson being old and infirm, a letter of invitation was sent to Mr. John Needham, a member of Mr. Timothy Jollie_s church at Sheffield, to come as an Assistant, which he accepted and was dismissed accordingly.

There is no account of the time of Mr. Wilson_s death, but he was living about 1717. He joined the church at Bedford August 28, 1656, the same day as Samuel Fenn. He was a sufferer for nonconformity. His goods were once carried into the market place to be burnt, but it was prevented. He was also for some time imprisoned in Hertford goal, at the procurement of Edward Draper, Esq. Many people observed a blast upon Draper_s affairs from that time. When he died he left a charity in bread to the poor of Hitchin. _A descendant of his, says Mr. Isaac James of Bristol, (to whom the writer acknowledges his obligation for most of the above particulars.) is glad to receive a loaf from it, so greatly is the family reduced._

Mr. Wilson, in connection with Mr. Chandler of Bedford, was an Editor of the folio Edition of Bunyan_s works published in 1692, and his name appears to the preface prefixed to the work. His son already mentioned, and his grandson Mr. Samuel Wilson of London, were eminent ministers of the gospel.

Mr. Needham succeeded him in the pastoral office at Hitchin, and laboured there till his death, February 10th, 1743. After him was Mr. Samuel James, A.M.. (the father of Mr. Isaac James) who came to assist Mr. Needham in 1742, and laboured till his death, August 22, 1773. On April 13, 1774, Mr. John Geard, the present worthy pastor, was ordained over them. It is a little remarkable that this church has had but four pastors in the period of 134 years! All these ministers have been baptists, though the church has always admitted of a mixed communion.

Letter from the Church.

That no information we possess respecting Mr. Wilson, who was an excellent minister of Christ, might be withheld, we subjoin a letter sent him by the church at Bedford in 1669, about ten years after he became a member: where he was at the time is not mentioned, but it should seem his brethren considered him as exposed to much temptation.

_Our dearly beloved brother Wilson,

Grace mercy and peace be with thee through our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen. Blessed be God, and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of all mercy, and the God of all comfort, for the abundant grace bestowed on thee, brother; and for that thou art so called, so preserved in Christ Jesus: who, we trust, will preserve thee to his kingdom and glory: to whom be honour and power everlasting.

_We are comforted in thee, our dearly beloved, when we remember that from a child, thou hast known the holy scriptures; which are able to make thee wise unto salvation; through faith in Jesus Christ, which faith was also in thy tender years fruitful and flourishing in thy gracious heart; to the great comfort of us thy brethren, and the glory of that grace that hath translated us out of the kingdom of Satan into the kingdom of Jesus Christ.

_It is also joy to us to behold, that notwithstanding thy lot is cast in a place of high transgression; yet thou shewest out of a good conversation thy works with meekness of wisdom. God help thee, brother, to remember the days of thy youth, the first ways of David were best. There are but few can say as Caleb: *As my strength was forty years since, so it is now, both to go out and come in before the people of God.*

Letter Continued

_Tis also said of Moses at the day of his death, his natural force was not abated: neither did his eyes wax dim. Brother, be always looking into the perfect law of liberty: and continue therein. The customs of the people are vain; learn therefore of no man any of the deeds of darkness; we must give an account of ourselves to God. It argueth not only wisdom, but great grace, when the soul makes all lie level to the word and Spirit of God: when he scorneth and counteth that unworthy his affections, that hath not on it a stamp of the things of heaven. It is said of the children of Israel, *They saw God and did eat and drink..* That is the right eating and drinking indeed. The glory of young men, is their strength to overcome the wicked one. *My son* (says Solomon) *if thy heart be wise, my heart shall rejoice even mine.*

_Now, brother, God hath not only counted you worthy to believe in his Son, but also to profess him before the world, wear his name in your forehead. They that Christ will own for his servants for ever, must say plainly, I love my Master: they must declare plainly, they seek a country. The first not of the peril of the last time is, *Men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, proud, &c.* O man of God! *Fly these things, and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness; Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life; whereunto thou are also called, and has witnessed a good profession before many witnesses.*

_Tis said of Hannaniah, he *feared God above many.* God continue our joy of thee, brother. Our hope of thee is steadfast, through grace; trusting in the Lord that he that hath begun a good work in thee will perfect it until the day of Jesus Christ. It is a strange sight

to behold those who did deed delicately to be desolate in the street; and they that were brought up in scarlet to embrace dunghills. We speak not these things to shame thee, but as our beloved brother we warn thee. O Timothy keep that which is committed to thy trust: watch and be sober. And if thou be inclined to sleep, let that of Delilah rouse thee; *The Philistines be upon thee Sampson!*

_Grace be with thee. The Lord is at hand. Behold the Judge stands at the door. Amen. Even so come Lord Jesus.

_Written by the appointment, and subscribed in the name and with the consent of the congregation.

SAMUEL FENNE

JOHN WHITEMAN

JOHN FENNE,

JOHN BUNYAN,

JOHN CARTER,

WILLIAM MAN, &c.

Church at Tring.

Another church in this County at this early period was at Tring, whose pastor was,

Richard Sutton. He attended the general Assemblies in London accompanied by John Bishop. We know nothing of him.

We have mentioned in a former part of this county that Henry Denne was ejected from Pyrton. It appears there was afterwards a baptist church formed there: probably by him. It is mentioned in the _Assemblies_ letters, Vol. I506, but without a pastor, minister, or messenger of any kind. In 1691, it is again mentioned, see Vol. I516, in *The association of churches in Herfordshire, Buckinghamshire, and Bedfordshire*. It was probably in a low state at this time, and has been for many years extinct. Mr. Isaac James says, _I know not when this Church broke up, but Dr. Peers, Vicar of Pirton, told me he knew their burial ground, which is now converted into a garden._

The churches of which we have given some account were we suppose Calvinistic in their Creed, and were those who in 1678 united with the churches in Bedfordshire, Buckinghamshire, and Oxfordshire in publishing a confession of faith. Of which see a fuller statement under the article Bedfordshire.

Herefordshire

From the contiguity of this County to the Principality the history of its churches is closely related with that of the Welch Baptists. Their History has been published in the Welch Language by the late Rev. Joshua Thomas of Leominster, and has been left in MS. in English. These Volumes are deposited in the Library of the Bristol Academy, and it is hoped will at some time or other be given to the English Public.

Some of the members of the churches at Olchon, and at the Hay, belonged to different places in Herefordshire; and this doubtless led to the establishment of our churches in this county.

Public Dispute

Another circumstance which very greatly promoted the spread of the Baptists' principles was the settlement of Mr. John Tombes, B. D. at Leominster, of which parish he was the Vicar before the year 1640. Whilst here he began to suspect the propriety of Infant baptism, if not sooner, as it is said in January 1643, he divulged those scruples to some ministers in London on the subject which he had long entertained. Returning to Leominster, Mr. Tombes preached in support of believers' baptism, and in opposition to that of infants, and on the 5th of September 1653, there was *a public dispute* (Title of Mr. Vaughan's Account of the Dispute.) in the church of St. Maries, in Abergavenny, in Monmouthshire, between John Tombes, B. D. Respondent, John Cragge, M. A. and Henry Vaughan, opponents. Mr. T. and Mr. V. disputed first, then the former with Mr. Cragge. After wards they all published on the subject. The title of Mr. C's publication is, *The Arraignment and conviction of Anabaptism*. Mr. Tombes's we have not seen, that of Mr. Vaughan's is a small 12 mo. of 111 page, and has a curious frontispiece, called, *The Anabaptists anatomized and silenced in a public dispute*. This inscription is in the middle of the picture and above it is represented *the manner of the Anabaptist's digging*; on one side *their laying on of hands*; on the other *their washing of feet*; at the bottom *The disputation*; when a minister in the pulpit, with his hat in his hand, is addressing a large auditory in a parish church.

This dispute, we are told in the title page, was occasioned by a sermon preached the day before by Mr. Tombes, upon St. Mark xvi, 16. *He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, and he that believeth not shall be damned.* In the Epistle dedicatory we are informed that *Mr. Tombes for several months together being importuned by letters and messengers, came at length to water that which Mr. Miles Prosser and others had planted, or (as some think) to confirm a child lately baptized in London; when he entered the pulpit great expectation was what mountains would bring forth; his text was Mark xvi. 10. whence he concluded that infant baptism was a nullity, a mockery; no baptism but by dipping and plunging, was lawful; all that would be saved must be rebaptized, or baptized after profession; that there was no such thing as infant-baptism in the primitive times, but that it came in with other corruptions, upon unsound grounds; and challenged the whole congregation to speak, if they had any thing to say to the contrary. There were many well learned that heard him, especially two, Mr. Bonner a neighbouring minister, and Mr. Vaughan a schoolmaster of the town, formerly a fellow of Jesus College in Oxford, who both for the present kept silence, only Mr. Bonner closed with him in his way to his lodging, that he had delivered some things contrary to what he had read in the ancients, and other things which grieved his spirit to hear, and desired therefore to confer with him thereabout the next morning. He slighted the grave old gentleman with as much contempt as Austin the monk did the British Commissioners at Bangor, yet told them that he would tarry in the town till such an hour. In the mean time, the greatest part of the people were offended, staggered, or scrupled, some not knowing what to think of their*

own, their children, or their ancestors_ salvation. The Anabaptists that night and especially the next morning triumphed, saying, where are your champions now? some of them are struck dumb, others dare not shew their faces, whilst Master Tombes is in the town, naming Mr. Cragge another neighboring minister; the report whereof being brought unto him, he repaired instantly to the Town, and meeting with Mr. Bonner, and Mr. Vaughan, they all went together to Mr. Tombes, where he was at a private house; little was said there, by reason of the throng of people pressing in; but it was agreed upon, that they should meet in the church or public meeting place at one o'clock, which was done accordingly; Mr. Tombes took the pulpit, the opponents a seat over against it; Mr. Bonner was prepared to give the onset, but a gentleman dissuaded him by reason of his age, and bodily infirmities, lest it should impair his health; Mr. Vaughan began, Mr. Cragge succeeded, continuing the opposition betwixt them almost five hours. When the dispute was ended, Mr. Cragge was desired by many godly persons to preach upon the same text Mr. Tombes had done the Lord's day following, which he did accordingly; I send you here enclosed the sum of all; a copy of Mr. Vaughan's conference, which a friend procured me from his own hand. Mr. Cragge's sermon and dispute I took from his own mouth by short writing, &c. Of Mr. Cragge's method of argument we give a specimen. He asserted _Some infants may not be baptized, therefore some infants may be baptized._ *This Mr. Tombes repeated and denied the consequence.* When Mr. C. said _Subcontrary propositions in a contingent matter may be both true. But these, viz. (some infants may not be baptized, some infants may be baptized) are subcontrary propositions in a contingent matter. Therefore they may be both true._ Can any one wonder that Mr. Tombes should say, _I am weary of this Pedantrie, and looking upon his watch, said, I promised but one hour and it is now above four hours; with that he clapped his book together._ (*Public Dispute*, &c. pp. 16, 68.)

This singular production is _wound_ up with a word of exhortation. _I beseech you, brethren, consider what an error this is, that robs the scripture of its truth, infants of their right, parents of their comforts, the church of its members, Christ of his merits, God of his glory. This is the mother of many other errors; hence sprung the *Ranters*, *Socinians*, *Anti-trinitarians*,, *Shakers*, *Levellers*, they that are above ordinances *Anti-scripturians*; an error that God hath expressed many signal judgments against, as Sleiden and Gastius in Germany, and some of our worthies in England have declared. As reverend Mr. Cotton tells one of his apostated flock, that had his house burned, and his children in it_No wonder that fire seized upon his house and God denied water to quench it, who denied that water should be brought to baptized his infants!!_ (*Public Dispute*, &c. p. 189.)

Association at Brecknock

The Baptist church at Leominster was originally connected with *Hereford*, and is spoken of, among some other churches, which met in Association at Brecknock on the 29th and 30th of the fifth month 1656. This Assembly agreed to publish a tract whose title page runs thus. _*An Antidote against the infection of the times; or a faithful Watch word from Mount Sion to prevent the ruin of souls: whereby some special considerations are presented to sinners, admonitions to saints, and invitations to Backsliders.* Published for

the good of all, by the appointment of the Elders and Messengers of the several churches of *Ilston*, *Abergavenny*, *Tredynog*, *Caermarthen*, *Hereford*, *Bradwardine*, *Cludock*, and *Llangors*, met at *Brecknock*, &c._ The date as above. Four passages of scripture are added as mottos. London: printed for T. Brewster, at the three Bibles, at the West End of *Paul_s*, 1656._In the account of the public dispute at *Abergavenny*, published in 1654, it is said, _The dispute at *Bewdly*, *Hereford*, and *Ross*, have been successful to astonishment._ At this time there was a Mr. Richard Harrison at *Hereford*, Mr. Thomas calls him _a noted popular baptist minister,_ but gives no account concerning him.

The church at *Hereford* and *Leominster*, is mentioned in the list of the general Assembly held in London in 1689, when Edward Price was pastor, as he was also in 1692. There was also a messenger from the church at *Weston* and *Pinniard*. This was a Mr. Richard Perkins. We understood that this church was properly at *Ryeford* in the parish of *Weston-under-Penyard*. In the year 1690 there was a plan adopted in the general Assembly, to divide the churches into distinct Associations, when the following were united, *Bromsgrove*, *Warwick*, *Dimmock*, *Hereford*, *Tewksbury*, *Morton-in-marsh*, *Hooknorton*, *Alcester* and *Kildy*.

It is probable that all these churches were the fruits of Mr. Tombes_s labours. He also founded a church of baptized believers at *Bewdly* while he was the minister of the parish. But this never increased, it is said, to more than 20 members, who it is likely joined other churches when Mr. Tombes was ejected from this living in 1662.

Origin of the church at Leominster.

The origin of the church at *Leominster* is thus related by Mr. Joshua Thompson._There were several baptists who attended the ministry of Mr. Tombes while he possessed the living at *Leominster*. There were among the communicants in this parish; but some of them scrupling the mixed communion of the parish, formed themselves into a distinct society, 1656. Here the church book begins with the following minute, viz. _The 25th of the 7th month, 1656, The church of Christ meeting at brother Joseph Patshell_s house in *Leominster* was constituted, and the persons undernamed did, after solemn seeking to God by prayer, gave up themselves to the Lord and to each other to walk in his appointments, which was done in the presence of our brother Daniel King and other brethren.

_It appears that the number of members then formed into a church was about 11 or 12. In the minutes of the Association met at *Alcester*, *Warwickshire*, on the 15th, 16th, and 17th of the 7th month, 1657, there was a Query from the church at *Leominster*, viz. Whether disciples may sit down as a church under the number of 12 or 13?_In these minutes it is further added whether the church at *Leominster* and *Hereford*, that walks distinct from Mr. Tombes were rightly constituted? It was adjudged they were a true constituted church. It was then judged that the said church might be received into the Association, though that was not finally determined till the messengers had acquainted their respective churches. The same minutes farther note that the people walking with Mr. Tombes sent a letter to the messengers, referring to their consideration, whether the

withdrawment of members were not a great evil? After some time it was declared to be their liberty and duty; and an answer to the letter was sent, justifying and approving their withdrawment.

_There appears to have been about this time another society of Baptists in and about Leominster, who contended for the *laying on of hands* upon persons baptized. It is not certain when, or by whose ministry, they were first gathered, though it is highly probable they received their first religious impressions, and formed their judgements upon the subject of baptism, from the preaching and writings of Mr. Tombes. I cannot find (says Mr. Thompson) there was any settled pastor before the revolution, 1688, though it appears Mr. Wm. Pardoe afterwards preached to the last of these societies at the dwelling-house of Mr. Rowland Head in Nether-Marsh, Leominster. Here he was apprehended about the year 1663, while preaching, and was committed to Hereford goal, where he was confined 3 or 4 years. (We shall mention Mr. Pardoe again in our account of the church at Worcester.) Their last minister was Mr. Rowland Head, at whose house the church used to meet. Mr. Head when young was wounded in Cromwell's Army, and left for dead on the field of battle. He lost so much blood as to render him very weak for a long time, and incapable of farther service; whereupon he was discharged from the army, and returned to Leominster. It is not said where Mr. Head began preaching, but he had the honor of suffering for Christ. He was apprehended whilst preaching, and committed to Hereford goal, where he was kept about four years. He finished his course about the year 1700, nearly 80 years of age.

_In 1694 these two churches and another at Hereford united under the joint pastoral care of Mr. Joseph Price, and Mr. Thomas Holder. Mr. Price died about seven years afterward, and Mr. Holder then became the sole pastor till his death, which happened December 1729, aged 72. He was taken ill in the pulpit and was carried home. He lived a few days, very patient and full of comfort in the prospect of his approaching end. When the church first united under his ministry it consisted of about 130 members.

Build a Meeting-house.

Soon after the Revolution, the congregation which had met in dwelling-houses during the troublesome times of Charles and James, were provided with a Meeting-house by the liberality of Mr. John Davis, of Eardisland, near Leominster, one of the members of the church, who gave them a large tenement and garden. Part of it was fitted up for a Meeting-house, and the other part for the minister; and part of the garden allotted for a burying ground. The deeds of settlement bear date 1696. The old meeting is still standing [1773] but the minister's house is taken down. (Thompson's MSS.)

Hampshire

We have not many materials concerning the Baptists in this county. The goal of Portsmouth was the residence of some, and Southsea Castle, now fast washing away by the attacks of the sea, was the dwelling of others at different periods during the reign of Charles II. The little information we possess relates to the following ministers.

----- Wentworth, *Portsmouth*
Richard Drinkwater, ----

Thomas Bowes, ----

Daniel Austin, ----

John Webbar, *Gosport*

John Sims, *Southampton*

Richard Ring, ----

Joseph Brown, *Christchurch*

Richard Kent, *Whitchurch*

Stephen Kent, ----

The general baptist church at Portsmouth is of ancient date. Its founder was Mr. Sicklemoor, who had been minister of the parish church of Singleton near Chichester. He left his living about 1640, in consequence of being convinced that infant-baptism had no foundation in the scriptures. Crosby says, _from his labours sprung the baptized churches of *Portsmouth* and *Chichester*._ The first pastor of Portsmouth was_

Mr. Wentworth, of whom we have no particulars. He was succeeded by Mr. Richard Drinkwater, who was born at Milton-Abbey, in Dorsetshire, A. D. 1646, and was baptized when about 23 years of age. In the same year, 1669, he was ordained pastor of this church. For many years he was a very successful preacher, and much esteemed for his piety, prudence, and good behavior.

He was, it is said, a faithful sufferer in the cause of truth and liberty, being a prisoner at one period for eighteen months, and other times suffering greatly from fines and prosecutions. He had a descendant of the same name who was ordained pastor of the general baptist church at Chichester in 1719.

At Portsmouth

Thomas Bowes. He was several years co-pastor with Mr. Drinkwater, and continued some years after his decease a pastor of the church. Crosby says _He was a person of great abilities and an excellent preacher, and endured much persecution for his

steadiness to his principles and practices._ Being a person of considerable property, the busy informers used to drive away his cattle from the farm he occupied at Milton, in Portsea Island. (The ordinances of baptism used to be administered in a pond upon this farm.) It is said that these were sold in great numbers, and for a great amount, to support them in debauchery and extravagance. In the account of the Portsmouth disputation, which it seems was brought about by his influence, he is called Farmer Bowes, and is said to be a messenger of the churches. He had a son who was a medical doctor, a member of this church, who died about 50 years since, and bequeathed some of his property to support the minister of the church, which still meets in the St. Thomas_s Street.

We have no account of the immediate successor of Mr. Bowes, but a Mr. Daniel Austin appears to have been settled there early in the last century. He had been a minister of the church at Spilshill in Kent, and returned to this place and died at Staplehurst.

It will be seen in Vol. I. p. 559, that there was a partiality in the members of this church for Mr. Matthew Caffin, who had introduced Socinian sentiments among the general baptists. The consequences of this unhappy alliance may be seen in the subsequent history of this society. It is now reduced to a very few persons, and these maintain sentiments which are directly opposed to those so successfully preached by the founders of the church.

Church at Gosport

Soon after the revolution, a particular baptist church was founded at Gosport. Its pastor was Mr. John Webbar. In Dr. Russel_s account of the Portsmouth disputation, it is said, _The congregation of baptized believers at Gosport, were so blessed with success in their ministry, that in a short time they had gathered twenty members, very worthy persons, who were added to them by baptism. Many others were amazed and put upon enquiry. This startled the Presbyterian party, because divers of them were of their number, either members or benefactors; and they began to fear the issue thereof._

Mr. Chandler of Fareham preaching at Gosport, and Portsmouth, (they say) _as it was supposed, to put a stop to this so hopeful a beginning,_ the church at Gosport being newly constituted, sent a letter to Dr. William Russel of London, as follows. _

_To our esteemed brother Russel, we the church of Christ at Gosport, send greeting.

We being under a pressure of conscience, having of late had the great ordinance of the Lord Jesus Christ (viz. that of Believers Baptism in water) inveighed against and ridiculed by one of the Presbyterian ministers, (Mr. Chandler by name;) and being much grieved that the ordinance of Christ should be thus triumphed over, and be trodden under foot; and hoping that you have so far engaged yourself in Christ_s cause, and that God hath given you abilities to defend it, we don_t only beg, but require your personal presence, and desire your assistance to defend that sacred ordinance, &c._

This letter led by Dr. Russel to engage in a public disputation with Mr. Chandler and others, which is related at the close of our first Volume.

Publish a Confession of Faith.

In 1697 this church published a Confession of their Faith, entitled, _The Articles of the Faith of the church of Christ, or Congregation, meeting at Gosport near Portsmouth, John Webbar, Pastor._ This Confession consists of 38 Articles, and a Postscript. The contents of this small volume agree exactly with the Confession recommended by the Assembly in 1689. We have no account of the period of the dissolution of the church, but the meeting-house where they assembled remained a few years past.

A few members of the church at Gosport being employed in the Dock Yard at Portsea, then called Portsmouth Common, found it extremely inconvenient to pass the Harbour from the places of their residences to that of their work. They therefore erected for themselves houses on the Common, and about the close of the 17th century built a small meeting-house on the same scite where the Baptists now assemble in Meeting-House Alley. The house was built of stones purchased at Netley-Abbey near Southampton; and were part of the Old Abbey which had fallen into ruins. The society was small for many years, arising partly from the difficulty they had in obtaining a settled minister, and also from the comparatively smallness of the population. At length, Mr. John Lacey, a member of the church, about the year 1730 was called to the pastoral office, and filled it honourably to himself, and to the edification of the church upwards of 50 years. The history of this church, now increased to more than 400 members, will be more properly the subject of a future volume.

Church at Southampton

The church at Southampton, of which Mr. Richard Ring was pastor at the time of the general Assemblies, existed in 1703, when we find from the records of the church in Little Wild Street, London, that a person named Augustine Tarbet was received from the church at Southampton under the pastoral care of brother Richard Ring. Of Mr. Ring we know nothing. The meeting-house was situated in Blue-Anchor lane, and has not been taken down till within a few years.

From Edward's Gangræna we learn that in 1646 a Mr. John Sims, a baptist minister, resided at Southampton. It is probable from his connection with Mr. Sicklemoor of Chichester, that he was a general Baptist. Some particulars related of him by Edwards are too curious to be omitted, as they shew the spirit of the times when the Presbyterians were in possession of the government and the revenues of the church. Being on a journey to Taunton in Somersetshire, he was prevailed on to preach in a parish-church. This gave such offence to the Presbyterians that he was apprehended at Bridgewater by virtue of the Act passed in 1646 against unordained ministers. The Committee of the County finding five letters upon him which were written by some of his friends to persons of their acquaintance on religious subjects, sent them to London as the ground of their complaint

against him. The government neglecting to take any measures to silence him, Edwards published these letters to expose the sins of the sectaries. The crimes exhibited against Mr. Sims were for _denying infant baptism_ and for presuming _to take a text and preaching before two Presbyterian ministers._ These extracts may amuse our readers.

Charge against Mr. Sims.

_Sunday, the last of May, he preached in the parish church of Middlesey, took him text out of iii Col. 1. before one Master Mercer, and Master Esquire, ministers, with a hundred more persons: and being desired to know how he durst presume to teach so publicly, being not called, and an ordinances of parliament to the contrary answered, *_If Peter was called, so was he.*

2. _Being desired to know why he taught contrary to the law of God, and the laws of the land answered, Why are they suffered to teach in London so near the Parliament-house? and that he allowed of the parliament so far as they go with his doctrine.

3. _Being desired to know whether he allowed of our baptism, answered, No: that for his part he was baptized by one Master Sicklemoor, and his manner of baptizing was, that the aforesaid Sicklemoor went first into the water, and he after him, so that he for his part would not allow of our baptism._

As for the letters we can assure our readers there is neither heresy nor rebellion in them unless baptizing believers by immersion, and rejoicing that the Presbyterians could not obtain the exclusive and unlimited power for which they had petitioned Parliament be so considered.

In the letters of the general Assembly we find there were Baptist churches at Christchurch, Whitchurch, and Ringwood. We have no account of either the churches or their ministers. The church at Ringwood was unrepresented in the Assembly.

(As the latter town is the place of his nativity, that Author hopes to be excused for mentioning in a note, an article preserved in Palmer_s _Nonconformist_s Memorial, though not relating to the Baptists. Of Compton South, B. D. it is said, _He was obliged many times to leave his house and numerous family, to preserve his liberty, and could have no quiet till the indulgence in 1672, when he exercised his ministry among an intelligent and unanimous people at Ringwood, who adorned the gospel by a suitable conversation. He went there every week (though 8 miles distant) and was constantly entertained at Moyles Court, the seat of the pious, though unhappy *Lady Lisle*, till by the severe sentence of Judge Jefferies, she was condemned for harbouring Mr. Hickes, a non-conformist minister, supposed to have been in Monmouth_s Army._ The Presbyterians, to whom Mr. South preached, built a large Meeting-house, with a good house for their minister, at an early part of the last century; but here also Socinianism has destroyed the life of religion, and nearly dispersed the congregation. A separation took place about 30

years since, and a small Independent church has been maintained till the present time. The Baptists had a church formed about the same period under the care of the later Mr. John Budden. At his removal to Downton a few years after, the remaining members of the church founded the church at Wimbourn, now under the care of Mr. John Miell.

Kent

In the first Volume there is an account that at a very early period there were many persons in this County who objected to the ceremonies of the church of England, and who suffered greatly for their nonconformity. In the answer of Mr. Pierce to Dr. Nichols, he says that he was persuaded they were some good honest dissenters, who are mentioned *as a new sect newly sprung up in Kent*, in the year 1552. (*Vindication of Dissenters*, p. 35.) Of this sect was Joan Boacher, or Joan of Kent, who we are sure was a Baptist. It is highly probably therefore that they were all Baptists of whom Mr. Pierce speaks, and if so the churches of Kent can boast of great antiquity. Perhaps they were the first in this kingdom.

It has been already mentioned that there is traditionary evidence that the general baptist church at Canterbury has existed 250 years; and that the church at Eyethorn is nearly of as early an origin. In a letter from the present pastor of that church, I am informed that _more than 220 years ago persons of the general baptist denomination met for the worship of God at Eyethorn. They seem to have been in a church state almost from their existence, at least there is proof they were so from 1624. Their number of members then was from 20 to 30. They used to meet in different private houses, and particularly at Street-end. The owner of which estate bequeathed to them a small annual sum; but which had been lost for many years. It also appears that they had a good idea of church-discipline. They did not approve of singing in the public worship of God, till about 1750. Persons of the name of John Knott, (progenitors of Mr. John Knott, nor pastor of the church at Chatham,) have been their pastors, or preachers for more than 180 years._ (Letter of Mr. Giles.)

Account of Mr. Lewis.

In *_a brief history of the rise and progress of Anabaptism in England,* by the Rev. John Lewis, Rector of Margate in Kent, published in 1738, we find some materials respecting the *particular* baptists in this county. He says, *_Of this judgement was one Luke Howard of Dover in Kent, who afterwards turning Quaker, as many others of them did, wrote a book entitled A Looking-glass for Baptists, &c. wherein he gave the following account of their coming into Kent. In the years 1643 and 1644 the people called Baptists began to have an entrance into Kent; and Anna Stevens of Canterbury, who was afterwards my wife, being the first that received them there, was dipped into the belief and church of W. Kiffin, who then was of the opinion commonly called, The Particular Election, and reprobation of persons: and by him was also dipped Nicholas Woodman of Canterbury, myself, and Mark Elfrith of Dover, with many more, both men and women, who were all of the opinion of the particular point, and who reckoned themselves of the seven churches in that day, who gave forth a book, called, The faith of*

the seven churches; which was then opposite to the Baptists that held the *general*, as is still the same; at which time there was great contest between those Baptists the *general*, as Lamb, Barber, and those which held the universal love of God to all; and Kiffin, Patience, Spillman, (Spilsbury) and Collyer, and those that held the particular election: so that if any of the Particular men or women of the *seven churches* aforesaid did change their opinion from the particular to the *general*, that then they were to be baptized again; because they said, you were baptized into a wrong faith, and so into another gospel; using that saying, that *if any man bring any other gospel than that which we have received , let him be accursed*. Whereupon several denied their belief and baptism, and were baptized again into the *general* opinion, or belief. But Nichols Woodman aforesaid, with Mark Elfrith, with all of them in Kent, except Daniel Cox of Canterbury, which never baptized any, held their baptism in the Particular, but changed their opinions to the *general*, and some to *Free-will*, and the *Mortality of the soul*, and many other things. This book (says Mr. Lewis) was printed in 1672, and to it was printed an Answer by Richard Hobbs, entitled, *The Quaker Looking glass looked upon* in 1673; but it does not contradict the account._

There were some ministers ejected from parishes in this County, who afterward became Baptists. Those we have heard of are Mr. Lawrence Wise from Chatham-Dock, Mr. Baker from Folkstone, and Mr. Steed of Lambhurst. Of these we shall speak in the course of our work.

In giving the history of the Ministers in this county we shall mention all the information we have been able to collect respecting the following persons_

JOHN KNOTT, *Eyethorn*.

GEORGE HAMMON, *Canterbury*

WILLIAM JEFFERY, *Bessell_s Green*

JOHN REEVE,----

FRANCIS CORNWELL,----

CHRISTOPHER BLACKWOOD, *Staplehurst*

RICHARD KINGSNORTH,----

JOSEPH WRIGHT,*Maidstone*

----GAMMAN,*Chatham*

----MORECOCK,----

----SAUDERS,----

----BAKER,----

----STEED,----

JOHN SEARLES, *Jun. Ashford*

THOMAS JARMEN,----

---- FISHER,----

SAMUEL TAVERNER, *Dover*

RICHARD HOBBS, *Chatham*

GEORGE ELISS,----

HENRY LONGLEY,----

Church at Eyethorn/Providential Escape.

John Knott. It is not known exactly to which of the Pastors of the church at Eyethorn the following accounts refer, but it is certain that they are true respecting one of them. He was a blacksmith, and being a zealous preacher, attracted the notice of the informers. A circumstance respecting these pests of society, as they were generally men of base character, deserves notice. Mr. Knott being at work in his blacksmith's shop, was apprized that an officer and a party of men were coming over Eyethorn Down, with a design to apprehend him. He had just time to escape by a back-door, and descend into an old saw pit covered with nettles, &c. When the informers had entered the house, where was Mrs. Knott with a child in her arms, the child immediately said _Daddy is gone out, and was proceeding, but she shook it and made it hold its tongue. While the informers were searching in vain for Mr. Knott, the good woman put out the dinner for the family. The informers wished her to give them a dinner: this she instantly complied with, and waited on them with the greatest cheerfulness. This kindness of Mrs. Knott seems to have produced a favorable impression on their minds, as the declared they would make no more search after her husband, nor do anything to distress such a good woman. The accordingly left the house, and Mr. Knott at that time escaped their hands. It is said also respecting one of the Pastors, John Knott, a blacksmith, and probably the same person, that his goods were confiscated and put up to sale; but much was he respected that none of his neighbors would either buy or bid for them. And as his neighbors would not, this induced strangers to copy their example, so that his goods were not sold. This was during the reign of Charles II. Mr. Grantham mentions a book entitled, *Knott's Charity maintained*, which we have not seen.

Remarkable Anecdote

George Hammon. This person has been already mentioned as signing a petition from the prisoners in the goal of Maidstone in 1660, and also to _Sion_s groans for her distressed._ Crosby says that he was pastor of a church at Biddenden in this country; but in this he was probably mistaken, for in a letter from a gentleman of Canterbury he is said to have been a pastor of the church in that city. Crosby adds, _He was a very eminent and remarkable man, for vindicating what he judged to be truth on all occasions; and was very much persecuted on that account. He died at Haseldon_s Wood, in the parish of Cranbrook._ When he died is not stated. That he was a very zealous man will appear from the following anecdote. While at Canterbury he was going to preach at a distant place, and was overtaken by a violent storm, of rain. While stopping under a tree for shelter a person from a house opposite called to him, and told him that he was an informer, and having heard there was to be preaching at such a place tonight he was going thither in order to give information of the persons who assembled. This was the very place where Mr. Hammon was appointed to preach, and he instantly replied; _I am a man-taker also._ Are you so, said the informer? then we will go together. When they arrived at the house, after sitting some time Mr. Hammon said to the informer, _Here are the people but where is the minister? Unless there is a minister we cannot make a conventicle of it, and therefore I propose that either you or I should preach._ On the informer declining it, Mr. H. said, _then I must,_ which he did with so much energy, and so much to the surprise of the informer, that he from this time dropped his profession and became an altered man.

The church at Canterbury was at this time grievously persecuted, so that they were obligated to meet for worship in the recesses of the adjacent woods. Here they were interrupted by the constables, who took about thirty of them before a Justice of the Peace, who immediately committed some of them to prison. But seeing among them a woman who had been formerly his servant, he said, _Mary, what are you amongst this people? there, you may go._ But Mary refused, saying, _I will take my lot with them;_ on which she with the rest were all sent to the goal at Canterbury.

Who was Mr. Hammon_s immediate successor at Canterbury we have no information, but a Mr. Daniel Dawson, a minister from the church at Smarden, or Spillshill, who died about the year 1737, is said to have been an Elder of the church at Canterbury, and died at the age of 30 years.

Works of Mr. Hammon.

Mr. Hammon published the following books. 1. A discovery of the latitude of the loss of the earthly paradise, by original sin; occasioned by a disputation between Mr. Matthias Rutton and himself, 1655. 2. Sion_s redemption discovered. 1655. 3. Sion_s redemption, and original sin vindicated; being an answer to Mr. Hezekiah Holland, 1658. 4. Annotations on the 9th chapter to the Romans. 5. Sion_s redemption, redeemed. 6. Truth and innocency prevailing against error and insolency; in answer to Mr. Holland_s book, entitled, Truth_s conflict, with error. 7. The good ancient laws and statutes of King

Jesus; occasioned by a conference between himself and Mr. Simon Hendon and his son John. June 3, 1658.

Mr. Hammon was a general baptist and signed the petition presented by them to Charles II. in 1660.

Church at Bedsell_s-Green.

William Jeffery. He was born about the year 1616, of pious parents, in the parish of Penhurst. He afterward lived at Bradbourn near Seven-oaks, in this county, and in connection with his brother David was very useful in gathering a church, of which they were, if not the founders, yet the great supporters. _In those days, (says Crosby) there was a congregation of Baptists about Orpington, which spread itself below the hill, and increased very much under the ministry of Mr. William Jeffery. He was ordained pastor of that church, then denominated the church of Bradbourn; which is the same that now meeteth at Bedsell_s-green, and through his unwearied diligence, many meetings were set up far and near, and a church was gathered about Speldhurst and Pemberry, which he settled in gospel order, and ordained Mr. John Care to be the elder thereof, which is the same that now meeteth at Tumbridge-wells. So that by his zeal and diligence, and that of several others who laboured with him for the good of souls, there were more than twenty particular congregations gathered in the country of Kent; which, with but little variation, remain the same to this day, and some of them are very large congregations.

_The great work of this faithful labourer in the gospel, and which he was very intent upon, was preaching and establishing the foundation principles of a visible church according to *Heb. vi* 1,2. without entering upon speculative and controverted points in religion. He was a successful, vigorous, and unwearied promoter, and defended of the Baptist interest; one who suffered much with great patience and pleasure in his Mater_s cause. He had several disputations not only with those of the establishment, but with the Independents. He endeavoured much to convince the Quakers of their errors, at their first appearance, and with Mr. Matthew Caffin joined issue with them at several places. He had the honour of baptizing two very learned and eminent ministers of the established church, Mr. Francis Cornwell, M. A. and Mr. Christopher Blackwood._

Character of Mr. Jeffery.

Mr. Jeffery was much valued for his steady zeal and universal piety, He signed the petition presented to Charles II. in 1660, and appears to have suffered much for the cause of nonconformity. He was one of the prisoners in Maidstone goal who signed the petition from thence, and also _Sion_s groans for he distressed, &c._ How long he continued there is not mention. Of the time of his death we have no account, but it is said _he died in a good old age, and was succeeded by his son John Jeffery, who was chosen and ordained the Elder of the church over which he had so long and so honourably presided._ Mr. Thomas Grantham calls him _that holy man William Jeffery a messenger of the baptized churches in Kent._ (Book IV. p. 73.)

He published a work entitled, *The whole faith of man; being the gospel declared in plainness, as it is in Jesus, and the way thereof, of old confirmed by divers signs, wonders, miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost.* The second edition was printed in 1659.

Of Mr. John Jeffery we have no particulars, but it should seem that he had as an Assistant Mr. John Reeve.

Answer to Prayer

John Reeve. _All I can obtain concerning him (says Crosby) is, that he was joint elder with Mr. William Jeffery. It happened that the magistrates of Seven-oaks sent some officers to the congregation meeting a Bradbourn; who took all the men from thence, of whom he might be one, and carried them to the town, [of Seven-oaks] where by an order they were kept prisoners all the night. On the morrow, when the Justices met together, the prisoners were had before them, and examined; and after some little discourse with them, were dismissed. They all with one heart, full of wonder and joy, returned from the place from whence they were taken, to return thanks to God, for this so unexpected a deliverance. When they came to the place, to their great surprize and inexpressible joy, they found the woman there who had not departed from the house, but had spent that evening, the night and morning, in prayer to God on their behalf._

The similarity of this circumstance with the deliverance of Peter, when prayer was made without ceasing by the church unto God for him; must have forcibly struck their minds, and have led them to sing

_It sha_n_t be said that praying breath,

Was ever spent in vain._

Mr. Cornwell Baptized

Francis Cornwell, M. A. He was a minister of the established church at Marden in Kent, and had been educated at Emmanuel College, Cambridge. During the reign of Charles I. he was imprisoned in Maidstone Goal for refusing the ceremonies then imposed by Archbishop Laud; such as wearing the surplice, kneeling at the sacrament, using the cross in baptism, &c. He had for his companion a Mr. Wilson of Ottham, who was probably confined for the same crime. While in prison, amongst the visitors who came to see there, there was a woman that informed them she had some scruple of mind, whether the baptism of infants could be proved from scripture. Mr. Cornwell endeavoured by the best scripture arguments he could use to remove her doubts; but found he could not do it so well to her satisfaction, nor to his own, as he could have wished. After she was gone he entered into conversation with his fellow prisoner Mr. Wilson on the subject, who candidly acknowledged that he never understood that infant-baptism could be proved by scripture, but had its authority from tradition; it being handed down from primitive times, as a practice generally received in the church. Mr. Cornwell who had considered the scriptures as the only rule of faith; and well knew that on this

principle only, all the protestant churches vindicated their separation from the church of Rome against all her impositions brought in by pretended primitive antiquity, though confessedly not to be found in scriptures. Adopting this principle in reference to baptism, he made a diligent search; and finding that he could not to his own satisfaction prove the authority of infant-baptism from scripture; but that in all ages it had its dependence on the decrees, canons, and councils of the church, as many other corruptions had, he resolved to relinquish the doctrine of infant baptism, and concluded that believers only, which made profession of faith and repentance were the proper subjects of baptism. He was accordingly baptized by Mr. William Jeffery; the precise time is not mentioned.

He appears to have been very zealous in propagating the principles of believers_ baptism, doubtless from being convinced how much a personal profession of faith in Christ, by attending to a positive command, entered into the whole of the gospel system. In his work, which he published on his becoming a baptist, entitled, *The Royal Commission of King Jesus*, he makes this appeal to the learned Divines, the Assembly of Divines the sitting, _Oh that the learned English Ministry would inform me, lest my blood like Abel_s cry aloud from heaven for vengeance, for not satisfying a troubled conscience! How shall I admit the *infant* of a *believer* to be made a visible member of a particular church, and be *baptized* before it be able to make confession of its faith and repentance?_

Visitation Sermon.

Before he had published this book, and while his sentiments were not known on the subject of baptism, he was chosen to preach a visitation sermon at Cranbrook in Kent. (It is a little singular that there is in this parish Church at present a Baptistery built for the purpose of immersion. It is a brick cistern place against the wall within the church above the floor. There are steps both outside and inside, for the convenience of the person baptized, while the Administrator stands by the side of the Baptistery to immerse the person without going into the water. It is supposed this was built by the Vicar, a Mr. Johnson, at the beginning of the last century. Since the memory of a person now living at Cranbrook, it has been twice filled with water for Mr. Johnson to baptized Adults.) His friends thought this a proper time for him to declare his sentiments, which he accordingly did in a sermon from Mark vii.7. _In vain so they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men._ In this he boldly declared that pædobaptism was an antichristian innovation, a human tradition, and a practice for which there was neither *example*, *precept*, nor true *dedication* in the word of God; at this several of the ministers were not only much startled, but greatly offended: and after the sermon was ended the Clergy were for disputing the point with Mr. Cornwell; but Mr. Jeffery being present he referred them to him. They soon found Mr. Jeffery too hard for them in disputation, which caused Mr. Blackwood to desire them to cease at that time; for he had taken the sermon as preached in short-hand, and would return the answer in print, which he hoped might be to the satisfaction of them all. Instead of doing this, however, he was convinced of the propriety of Mr. Cornwell_s arguments and renounced infant-baptism.

Sentiments of Mr. Cornwell.

Thus by Mr. Cornwell_s means the controversy was raised in this county and the truth gained ground very extensively. He did not continue long after this in the established church, though it was now by the presbyterians much reformed to what it had been. Besides his denial of infant-baptism, he disliked both national and parochial churches; and taught that the true church was to consist only of such as professed repentance from dead works, and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ; and who were baptized according to his command, according to the pattern of the first churches in Judea. Such a church was quickly gathered by him in the county of Kent, but where it is not said.

He was a very zealous opposer of persecution for conscience sake, and of an imposed uniformity. When the ordinance of parliament was published in 1646 to silence all lay-preacher, that is, as they explained it, all who had not received episcopal or presbyterian ordination, or that should preach any thing contrary to the articles of faith, and directory of public worship, published by the Assembly of Divines at Westminster, he strongly opposed the unchristian spirit of these proceedings in a pamphlet, entitled, *Two queries worthy of consideration*. 1. _Whether that ministry that preacheth freely the gospel faith, that the Lord Jesus is the Christ, as the Apostle Peter did, be not truly orthodox?_ 2. _Whether it be agreeable to the word of God, contained in the holy scriptures, to silence or inhibit any ministers of Jesus Christ, from preaching this gospel faith freely._

Being (as he said) a loyal covenanter for a pure reformation in England, he affirmed the former and endeavoured to maintain it by several arguments. The latter he denied, and intimated, that whosoever shall be guilty of any such practice, would act as the Jews did who cast the blind man out of the synagogue for confessing that Jesus was the Christ.

Mr. Francis Cornwell, Jun.

He continued till his death a faithful shepherd of that flock which had been gathered by his ministry in Kent, and was succeeded in that place and office, by a son of his own name and principles. This was either at Cranbrook or its vicinity. The Baptists in and about Marden and Cranbrook were united in one Society. Mr. Francis Cornwell son of the above was their Pastor. In the year 1706 the church was divided into two churches, one meeting at Cranbrook and the other at Marden, and Mr. Cornwell appears to have occasionally assisted them both. (Thompson_s MSS.) Mr. Neal in his history of the Puritans calls him _one of the most learned divines that espoused that cause of the Baptists._ As he left the establishment before the act of uniformity was passed, this accounts for his not being mentioned by Dr. Calamy.

His works besides the two pamphlets already published were 1. *A Conference between Mr. John Cotton, and the Elders of New England*, 8vo. 1646. This was doubtless in favour of toleration, and opposed to Mr. Cotton_s *bloody tenet washed*. 2. *A Description of the spiritual Temple; or the difference between the Christian and Antichristian church*. 8ov. 1646.

Mr. Blackwood leaves the Church and Goes to Ireland.

Christopher Blackwood. He was a minister somewhere in the Weald of Kent, and was possessed of a small parochial charge in that county at the beginning of the civil wars. It is not known where he received his education, but it is probable he was trained up at one of the universities. Captain Dean, in a letter to Dr. Barlow, reckons him among those of his acquaintance who voluntarily left their parochial charges and benefices, on account of their disapproving the baptizing of infants; and concerning whom he says, _they were worthy guides, well qualified in all respects for the ministry._

The circumstance which led him to embrace the opinion of the Baptists has been already mentioned. With the design of writing against Mr. Cornwell's sermon he studied the subject closely, and from his investigations began to suspect that infant baptism was indeed what had been stated, a human tradition; and that it was attended with more evil consequences than he had ever before considered. When they met again according to agreement, he brought in his arguments which determined against infant baptism: but there were none who had brought anything in its defence. One person said, that they sought for truth and not for victory; and therefore proposed, that they might have his papers and examine the arguments. The rest approving of this motion, the papers were accordingly left with them; but after waiting for them some time, and getting no answer, he sent for them, and after some correction and enlargement, sent them to the press and published them, under the title of _The storming of Antichrist in his two last and strongest garrisons; compulsion of conscience, and infant baptism._ This work led some of the Presbyterians to write with great warmth against him, because he opposed their intended establishment.

Crosby was not acquainted with the circumstance of his gathering a Baptist church at Spilshill near Staplehurst in connection with Mr. Richard Kingsnorth. We have no account of the time when he left this people, but the occasion of it was his differing from Mr. Kingsnorth, his fellow preacher, on the subject of particular and personal election, which Mr. Kingsnorth opposed.

It is probable that Mr. Blackwood went into the army, and went with General Fleetwood and Lieutenant Ludlow to Ireland, as we find he was a minister at Dublin in 1653. He was, it is probable, the writer of the letters sent from Ireland to the English and Welsh Churches recorded in the first Volume of our history; as he is called, in a letter sent from Ireland and written by Mr. Thomas Harrison, to Secretary Thurloe, the *Oracle of the Anabaptists in Ireland*. As this contains some information respecting him we give an extract from it, which is as follows. Mr. Harrison says,

_We went solemnly to Mr. Blackwood, the Oracle of the Anabaptists in Ireland, complaining of their total withdrawment from us in public worship. He alledged the cause thereof to be our not observing the order of the Apostles by baptism; nevertheless they could most of them join with us provided, 1. That in a day of prayer they may speak last, that if any thing be spoken against God, or Christ, or truth, they might have an opportunity to bear witness against it. 2. That singing of psalms be wholly forborne. 3. That all bitterness and terms of reflection be forborne. 4. That we forbear to give magnifying titles to men; or to be large in the commendation of their graces, when (says

he) we hear no such thing by them, but rather the contrary. 5. That we should not hinder godly men from places of authority and power because of their judgement. This man is now fixed with the congregation at Dublin, and Mr. Patient appointed an evangelist to preach up and down the country. This letter was dated Dublin, Oct. 17, 1655, and proves the high estimation in which Mr. Blackwood was held in that country.

He continued the pastor of this church for several years afterward. In a work he published in 1659, and printed in London, he is still a preacher to a church of Christ in the city of Dublin in Ireland. It is likely the strange and unexpected events which took place the next year, in consequence of the restoration of the King, were the cause of Mr. Blackwood returning to England, where we find him signing the declaration against Venner's rebellion 1660. We know nothing of the time nor the place of his death. From what has been said of him it is evident he was a very learned man. Mr. Fisher in his *Baby Baptism no Baptism*, speaking of him, says, "A man better read in the Fathers, than either you or I, yea you or Mr. Marshall also." He thought the laying on of hands after baptism was according to scripture and antiquity. This subject is largely defended in his work entitled, *A Soul searching catechism*.

His works were 1. *Apostolical baptism; or a sober rejoinder to Mr. Blake in answer to his former treatise*. 2. *Four treatise, The excellency of Christ*—A preparation for death—Love to Christ—Love to our neighbors—Also a treatise concerning repentance; wherein the doctrine of restitution is largely handled: with a solution of many cases of conscience concerning it. 4to. 1653. 3. *A Soul searching catechism*: wherein is opened and explained not only the six fundamental points, *Heb. vi. 1.* but also many other concerns in the Christian religion. 2 Edit. 4to. 1653. 4. *A brief catechism concerning baptism*, first published at the end of his *Storming of Antichrist*; afterwards reprinted for the satisfaction and information of the people of God in Lancashire. 1652. 5. *An Exposition and Sermons upon the 10 first chapters of the gospel of Jesus Christ according to Matthew*, by Christopher Blackwood, preacher to a church of Christ in the city of Dublin in Ireland. London 1659.

We have not seen any of the above except the last, a Copy of which is in Dr. William's Library, Red Cross Street, London.

The church in Kent which Mr. Blackwood was instrumental in gathering, assembled in a large antique farm house, which is still standing and called Spilshill-house, a small distance from Staplehurst Street. Of the minister who was left in charge with this people we proceed to give some account.

Richard Kingsnorth. It is said that he was a *churchman* (we suppose a clergyman) who attended the visitation sermon of Mr. Cornwell at Cranbrook, before mentioned. Being convinced of the truth of the doctrines delivered at that time, he embraced the opinions of the baptists, and was baptized by Mr. William Jeffery.

He was it appears instrumental in gathering the church at Spilshill house, and the people making choice of him to be their Elder, obtained assistance from ministers and he was ordained to serve them in that office.

We are informed that Mr. Kingsnorth vindicated the doctrine of universal redemption, in opposition to particular or personal election, as also the final or absolute perseverance of the saints, as may be seen in his *pearl of truth found out between two rocks of error*; and his *gospel certainty of everlasting felicity*.

Church at Spilshill.

Mr. Kingsnorth continued with this people till his death, about 1677. It is probable that he was very useful in building up this church, as it very considerably increased and appears to have been blessed with a large abundance of the gifts and graces of the Holy Ghost.

From this being one of the original general Baptist churches, it is desirable to ascertain what were its foundation principles, and what were the cause of its prosperity and decay. We are indebted to a valuable manuscript document for the information we present our readers on this subject. _The church always stood by and maintained the doctrine of universal redemption, and never ordained any man to the office of Elder that was contrary minded; though the belief of that doctrine was not made altogether necessary to communion, if the persons who were of different sentiments, did not disturb the peace of the church in maintaining contrary sentiments, to the suppressing the doctrine of universal redemption.

There were many instances of this, one of which is particularly mentioned. This was concerning Robert Knight who some years after he was ordained an Elder of this church changed his sentiments in the principles before mentioned, and remained in peace and satisfaction an Elder till his death._

Thus they continued in peace and enjoying prosperity while they all *_held the head,*_ and agreed in the fundamental principles of the gospel, namely, those which were necessarily connected with the dignity of the person of Christ, the perfection of the Savior_s work, as the ground of hope and the alone procuring and meritorious cause of a sinner_s salvation.

But in the year 1677 a fatal dispute arose which caused great distractions, and ultimately a division in the church. This affair is thus related, _After the death of Richard Kingsnorth, there appeared a difference among them respecting the doctrine of the ever blessed Trinity, on which the church was grounded; and after many debates which arose on this head, they brought it to this conclusion, viz. that forasmuch as there was a division among the *elders* and *ministers* respecting this business, they for peace sake granted a quiet dismission to their brethren who differed in this point._

Separation

The Ministers who left the church, and who are called the *dissenting* brethren, who opposed the foundation principles of the society were, Thomas Kingsnorth, the eldest son of Richard Kingsnorth the former pastor; Henry Kingsnorth, another son, William Jeffery, and Henry Hillier. Those who continued minister at Spilshill were Daniel Kingsnorth, Brother to the deceased pastor, Robert Knight, who lived then at Frittenden and afterwards at Maidstone, Richard Kingsnorth, John Austin, Henry Snode, and James Kingsnorth, the son of the first pastor, and brother to James, Henry, and Richard.

Of the separation party we are informed that Mr. Samuel Patteson was a principle person, and the church they formed was sometime under his care, though at that time he was not minister, but the society was called his meeting. This party met at Biddenden and Frittenden, and afterwards at Biddenden and Headcorn.

This was the consequence of the introduction of those principles which were disseminated by Mr. Matthew Caffin of Horsham, of which we have already given some account. (The manuscript from which we have obtained the above information contains a list of the *Ministers* and *Elders*, to the number of 40, which have belonged to the church at *Spilshill* and *Smarden* from its foundation to the present time.) Vol.I.p.549-554.

Effects of Socinianism.

By observing the above note it will appear that the church at *Spilshill*, *Staplehurst*, and *Smarden*, for it must be recollected that these are used as applying to the same people, continued for many years to prosper and produced many useful ministers. One of the *Pastors* and two of the ministers went off with what is called the Biddenden party. And three of the Pastors and four ministers continued at Spilshill. The fault perhaps was that in such a case, and on such a subject, they should *grant a quiet dismissal*; as this would certainly appear like a want of conviction of the evil nature and tendency of Mr. Caffin's erroneous sentiments. Had they proceeded to the exclusion of these persons because they had opposed the doctrines on which the church was founded, that matter would not afterwards have been agitated, as it appears it was from the account of Mr. Caffin, with others, on one side, and three ministers from London of the other, endeavouring to make up this *rent* by disputing on these two questions 1. Whether it be absolutely necessary to Christian communion to believe that Christ is of the same essence with the Father? 2. Whether it be absolutely necessary to Christian communion to believe that Christ is of the substance of Mary his mother? It is not said how this dispute terminated as to the terms of communion in the church at Spilshill, but we suppose they determined to abide by their first principles, and to make the affirmation of these questions the terms of Communion. The church *Biddenden* it should seem was not long in peace, for we find that a Mr. Cooper had charged Mr. Caffin with promoting the excommunication of some persons at Biddenden on account of *mere principles*, but from his own relation (Crosby says) it *was* because they had caused divisions and offences and made an unrighteous rent and schism in the church of Christ contrary to the doctrine of charity and forbearance delivered to them in the gospel._

It is not said how long Daniel Kingsnorth, Robert Knight, and Richard Kingsnorth continued pastors of the Church at Spilshill, but we find that the sixth Elder was Thomas Gillham, the seventh Vincent Jennings, the eighth John Edmead, the ninth Daniel Kingsnorth, probably the son of the former, the tenth George Kenhelm, and the eleventh John Austin, who was the *second minister*, and one of those who stood firm to the foundation principles of the church. Perhaps many of these may have been contemporary with each other, and some after a time may have removed to other churches, as was the case with Robert Knight who removed to Maidstone.

Caffinites.

In Lewis_ _history of the Anabaptists_ he says that Mr. Caffin held some particular opinions, by which some of the Anabaptists thereabout are still distinguished and called Caffinites. It is likely that people at Biddenden and Headcorn were intended. Crosby was much offended with Mr. Lewis for this assertion, and says he knew not any baptists there or elsewhere who were distinguished by that name, though he acknowledges the general Assembly was thus called, by those who supported Mr. Wright. It appears from the church book of the Society in Little Wild Street that there were persons called by this name in London.

Mr. Joseph Wright.

Joseph Wright. He was pastor of the church at Maidstone, which it is likely was gathered by him. We have not much account of him, which we exceedingly regret, as he appears to have been a very considerable man among the general Baptists, a zealous preacher of the gospel, a faithful sufferer in the cause of nonconformity, and a firm defender of the doctrine of the Trinity, the proper divinity of the Son of God, Justification by the imputed righteousness of Christ, &c.&c. Doctrines these which the general Baptists for nearly 150 years universally professed, and maintained, as may be seen by their early confessions of faith, and by the work of the celebrated Thomas Grantham, entitled *Primivitus Christianismus*.

Mr. Wright was born in the year 1623, and was educated at one of the universities. It is not known when he entered on the work of the ministry, nor whether he was ever in the established church, if he was it must have been after the establishment of Presbytery. After the restoration in 1661 we find his name signed to the famous petition which was owned and approved by upwards of twenty thousand general Baptists, accompanied with *a brief confession of their faith*.

This petition he was selected to present in company with Mr. Thomas Grantham, to King Charles II. who admitted them to his presence, and appeared to receive the Petition very graciously, and promised them his protection.

This however his Majesty did not attend to, not even in behalf of either of these eminent persons; for soon after we find Mr. Wright a prisoner in Maidstone goal uniting in an address which was published addressed to the King, Parliament, and People,

entitled, *Sion's groans for her distressed, or sober endeavours to prevent innocent blood*: here he lay for *twenty years*. As it is said he practised medicine, it is probable that he by some means or other followed his profession. An old person now living at Chatham, and a member of the baptist church, who was born at Maidstone, remembers hearing his father speak of being cured by Mr. Wright, while he was a prisoner in the goal. Mr. Wright had the happiness to survive all his persecutors, and enjoyed 26 years liberty in his Master's work; about fifteen of these were after the glorious revolution in 1688. He died about the year 1703, at the age of 80.

His opposition to Mr. Caffin.

Crosby says _he was a man of great piety and learning, a very serious and diligent preacher, who promoted the cause of the Baptists very much._ After declaring this, in another part of his work, he speaks of him as having much injured his friend Mr. Matthew Caffin, who in the freedom of conversation had intimated some doubts respecting the *Athanasian Creed*, which brought upon him much trouble; _for (says Crosby) Mr. Joseph Wright of Maidstone, a man of great piety and learning, one in whom he put great confidence, and maintained close friendship, at length became his enemy, and put the worst sense on his private discourses, and charged his opinions as blasphemous and heretical._ The account of this matter will be found in our account of the Assemblies of the general Baptists after the Revolution, in the first Volume. And the principles which Mr. Caffin held, with the effects which had been produced by them at Smarden in 1677, may be seen by referring to the Articles Richard Kingsnorth and Matthew Caffin. Though Mr. Wright was much censured by many as being scrupulously nice *mere sentiment*, as it was called, yet those who have observed the effects produced by the dissemination of these principles among the general Baptists must admire the discernment, the zeal and fortitude which he discovered in this matter. Thinking, as he evidently did, that Mr. Caffin's sentiment was a perversion of the fundamental principles of the gospel, he would have forfeited all claim to the character of a servant of Christ, and a minister of the gospel, had he not endeavoured to _convert his brother from the error of his way;_ and reproved him to the face for what he ought to have been blamed. Whether it were right for him to exhibit these charges at a general Assembly, where it is probable many would be inclined to take part with the accused party; especially if he were disposed to cover his real sentiments. It is likely similar events happened in others of the churches, to that which we have mentioned as occurring at Spilshill. It is a proof too that Mr. Wright must possess uncommon fortitude, when after being *much discountenanced* for what they considered _his unbecoming reflections, and want of charity,_ that he resumed the charge from one general Assembly to another, till they decided as has been related.

Leaves the Assembly

In order to prove his sincerity, we find that Mr. Wright left the Assemblies, and protested against them for encouraging error, and that his sentiments, though objected to by the Assembly, obtained powerful support from the churches of Buckinghamshire and Northamptonshire. By subsequent events which have taken

place in that denomination; it will appear to all those who love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity, that by his penetration and zeal in opposing error and supporting truth; he has raised a monument to his memory more durable than stone or marble.

Buried at Tovil.

He lies interred in the Dissenters' burying ground at Tovil, about a mile and half out of Maidstone, where his Tomb still remains with inscriptions both in Greek and Latin, which are nearly defaced. There is a traditionary report that he was once mayor of Maidstone. We have not heard of Mr. Wright publishing any thing except a work against Mr. Caffin, and of which the latter gentleman spoke very contemptuously.

We suppose Mr. Wright was succeeded at Maidstone by Mr. Robert Knight, who was an Elder of the church at Spilshill when the division took place in 1677, and who it is said went afterwards to Maidstone. He was zealously opposed Mr. Caffin's sentiments, and of course vindicated Mr. Wright, and perhaps on this account was chosen his successor. We have no account of his death.

Mr. Gamman. It should seem from Crosby's account that he was a minister at Chatham. He was a very zealous preacher, and with one Richard Stayes and others was committed a prisoner to Maidstone jail. The circumstances of this affair are thus related. Being assembled for divine worship of a Lord's day morning; they were taken from their meeting, and driven like beasts, men, women, and children, through Chatham Street to the Crown Inn at Rochester, where men were confined while the women and children were crying in the street. Mr. Gamman opened the window, and exhorted them to stand fast, and be stedfast in the faith, and God would reward them in the great day.

The same church was at another time greatly disturbed, by the means of one Stowel, who belonged to the *College*, a very busy man in those days. Whether it were by an order from the Justices or not, is not said, but many of the people were put on a ship at Blackstakes in order to transport them. The wind shifting they were unable to put to sea, and continued so long at this point, that the Captain at length said, that he believed these people being on board was the cause of it; and told Stowel that if he would have them banished he should do it himself, and so put them on shore: the wind immediately shifted and the Ship sailed without them. What this Stowel was, that he could assume so much power, is not said, but a very affecting circumstance is related concerning him, which goes to prove that none ever hardened himself against God and prospered. This violent persecutor ended his life at the gallows for murder, it being proved that he willfully killed a man by throwing him out of a window.

Church at Chatham.

Edward Morecock. He was pastor of the Baptist church at Chatham. He was born in January 1626. We have no account of the period when he settled at Chatham, but it is supposed it was after the Restoration, as it is said, He had been a Captain of a man of war in Oliver's time, and in an engagement at sea had been shot through the body by a musket-ball: but God having designed to make him useful in the church preserved his life and delivered him from destruction. He appears to have been employed after leaving his command, in raising Ships which had been sunk or shipwrecked, by which means he obtained a very handsome provision for his family. A circumstance which occurred in 1667 found him much employment in this way. The Dutch Admiral, Van Ghent, on the 16th of June, sailed up the river Medway, made himself master of Sheerness, and after burning a Magazine full of stores, to the value of 40,000 pounds, blew up the fortifications. This action alarmed the city of London; so that to prevent greater mischiefs several ships were sunk, and a large chain put across the narrowest part of the Medway. But by means of an easterly wind, and a strong tide, the Dutch ships broke through the chain, and sailed between the sunk Vessels. They burnt three ships, and after this, sailing as far as Upnorecastle, burnt three more at Chatham. Fearing all the Dutch ships would sail up to London bridge, thirteen ships were sunk at Woolwich, and four at Blackwall. (Rapin. Vol. II. 645.) The Dutch were so near Chatham, that they threw many shot into the town, one of which was found in Mr. Morecock's garden. It is said that he was well rewarded by government for raising these ships at the end of the War in 1672, and was strongly solicited to go to sea for the purpose of raising others which had been wrecked: but as this would have interfered with the duties of his pastoral offices, he declined accepting it.

All his services to the state however did not preserve him from persecution for his nonconformity. Being a man of some figure and influence, and of great zeal and firmness, he was in the latter part of the reign of Charles II. harassed by frequent warrants for seizing both body and goods. He had however obtained so much esteem and affection by his unblameable and obliging behavior amongst his neighbors, particularly among the gentlemen of his neighborhood, that whenever any warrant was issued for seizing his person, one of the justices would privately send his servant to give him notice before the officers could come to execute it; when he usually retired to the house of one of his daughters in Essex, which he could easily do by crossing the rivers. He was however fined monthly for not going to church, till he was exchequered for the sum of 800 pounds. His house was very often plundered during his absence, his goods being seized and carried off. IN order to secure his property for a numerous family of nearly twenty children, he made it over to an intimate friend, who faithfully returned it after the danger was over. One of the informers against him, named Hinton, very frequently used to threaten him that he would have him laid in prison and get possessed of the best furniture in his house; and had actually promised to give it to a lewd woman with whom he accompanied, but, through the good providence of God, Mr. Morecock was never imprisoned; which many of his brethren suffered. Going one day to visit some of them in Rochester jail, he saw this Hinton in confinement, and cheerfully

addressing him said, _Well friend, you are got here before me._ This poor creature, it is said, afterwards died miserably, the flesh rotting from his bones.

Plot against him fails.

Upon the accession of James II to the throne, when he wished to obtain the favour of dissenters in order to bring in popery, Mr. Morecock being known to be a leading man among the dissenters, was very much courted; particularly by lord Roper, a papist, who offered him, in the king's name, any thing that he would accept. But he absolutely refused to accept any commission from the king, assigning to his friends this reason, that the favours offered by the king to dissenters, were designed only to bring them into a snare. His firmness in this instance is supposed to have been the occasion of a design against his life. Two witnesses were procured to swear against him, that he had been an officer in Monmouth's army, in the West of England; but this design totally failed, for he proved by unexceptionable evidence that at the very time they swore he was in that army, he was in another place. He had the happiness to survive all these storms for several years, and to see the effect of the glorious revolution, which set him and thousands at liberty from civil despotism and ecclesiastical tyranny. He died August 1693.

Minister of Chatham

George Saunders. He was many years a preacher to the church of Chatham in connection with Mr. Morecock. We know but little of him. He was once fined for preaching; was universally respected and beloved by all people of all denominations, though in a low condition of life. It is probable he succeeded Mr. Morecock as pastor of the church, as he lived till the year 1715, when he died about 60 years of age.

Mr. Baker. He was an elder of the church at Chatham, but at what period is not mentioned. Crosby had only the following respecting him, _Dr. Calamy mentions one of this name ejected from Folkstone. If it be the same man, he says, after his ejection, he became very poor, and was indisposed in his head, and his understanding impaired. He lived for some time in a very afflicted, distressed state, and at length died at Dover._

Robert Steed. Crosby does not say when he was settled, but merely says, _Dr. Calamy mentions on Mr. Steed ejected from Lambhurst in the county of Kent. He says he was advanced in years, and was very eminent for his piety: if this be our Steed, he was one of them who left the established church for the sake of a good conscience._

Mr. Fisher.

Samuel Fisher. His parents designed him from his childhood, for a minister of church of England; and in order to qualify him for this station had him well instructed while a boy at private schools. When he had attained a competent share of grammar learning, he was sent to one of the universities, where his diligence and progress were so great that he outstripped most of his fellows. His favourite study was eloquence. Rhetoric and poetry were the sciences on which he placed the greatest value. He became singularly learned, and wonderfully eloquent, and had an accurate knowledge of the Greek and Latin antiquities.

When he had finished his studies at the university and had taken his degrees, he was ordained first a deacon, that a presbyter of the church of England; the former he received from a bishop before the civil wars; the latter from certain Presbyterian ministers after episcopacy was laid aside.

His first preferment was to be a chaplain in the family of the noble and pious Sir Arthur Haslerigg. He demeaned himself in this station so well, that the report of his fame prevailed on some who had it in their power to promote him, that they gave him a parochial living at Lidd in Rumsey Marsh, in the county of Kent, of £500 per year. But it is remarked that notwithstanding his great learning and high preferment, he still preserved a humble mind, and affable carriage; and would converse freely, not only with such as were very much below himself, but also with serious christians, who were of different sentiments from himself.

Among the rest there was a Baptist minister in those parts, with whom he kept an intimate correspondence. This person was frequently calling upon him to justify from scripture the lawfulness of baptizing children; and to shew by what authority they had changed the ancient custom of immersion, and used sprinkling in that ordinance. Whether this was the minister of whom Mr. Fisher speaks when he relates the means by which he embraced the principles of the Baptists is not said. Speaking to his opponents he says, _I will refer you to a certain book which is extant of one Mr. Jackson, once of Biddenden in Kent, stiled *Nineteen arguments proving circumcision to be no seal of the covenant of grace*, whereunto is annexed the unlawfulness of infant-baptism on that ground, of which book, I must needs give testimony thus far to the world, that it being brought to me while it was but a manuscript, and myself a presbyter of your high places, in some confidence that I could answer it, how easily I might have shuffled it off, had I set myself so to do, I will not say, but I could not answer it solidly nor *salva consciencia*, and therefore I let it alone for a time, till considering further of it, and of other things, I was stirred up to the study of by it, I was at last converted to the truth, whereupon as the best answer I was capable to give I signed it in thus wise (as I find Luther once signed another book in the like case) viz. Memorandum that taking this book in hand at first to confute it, I was at last convinced by it._

Joins the Baptists.

Having embraced the principles of the Baptists, he did not consult with flesh and blood, but immediately quitted his living and was baptized and joined himself church at Ashford.

Having left so profitable a living in the church, he employed himself in cultivating a small farm he had in the neighborhood, by which, with a little property he possessed, he had a sufficient support. He continued however still in the exercise of his ministry, and in a short time after took the charge of a congregation of Baptists [It is supposed at Folkstone.] The report of so learned and pious a man having sacrificed £500 a year to join the Baptists spread far and near, and contributed greatly towards the promotion of their principles. Some hundreds were baptized by him. Being refused the churches to preach in, he once preached on a tombstone in the church-yard, but was so much interrupted that he was obliged to desist and retire to some other place. He was frequently engaged in public disputations on the subject of baptism; as once at Ashford before many of the Clergy and thousands of people. Twice with a Mr. Kent, at Cranbrook, and Staplehurst. With Dr. Channel, at Petworth, January 1, 1651, before many hundreds. Again with the same gentleman, January 5, in the same year. He was engaged also in controversy with Mr. Simpson of Marden, for says he, _while I am writing this very line in answer to Mr. Baxter, there trifle brought to my hands of a sheet and a half piping hot from the press, penned by Mr. Simpson of Marden, who tells strange stories of his being stormed on every side, and almost tired out by the oppositions of the Anabaptists, as he calls them. And also now he had once to do with a host of them, Sep. 10, 1649, in which conflict myself, was more than an eye-witness, though much inferior to a worthy brother then present, also Mr. Christopher Blackwood._

It is not known how long he continued with the Baptists, but it is said he was considered as the ornament of the whole sect, and looked upon as one of their chief defenders.

Turns Quaker.

But about the year 1655 being strongly attacked by two of the leading men of the people called Quakers, Caton and Stubbs, he embraced their sentiments and wrote several books in defence of their opinions, which were held in great esteem amongst them.

He published a Folio Volume on the subject of Baptism, which is the only Folio printed against Infant-baptism, this is entitled *Baby Baptism mere Babyism*. He appears to have been an excellent man, and was acknowledged by all parties to have been of eminent piety and virtue. It is likely that he was imprisoned for his sentiments as a Baptist, as he speaks of being at Ely house, March 27, 1653.

The particular baptist church at Ashford, it is said in a MS. before the writer, appears from ancient records to have been formed in the year 1653. In this year there was a congregation of Baptists who assembled here, at Wye, Naccolt, and the adjacent places. These were formed into an organized church and agreed on eleven Articles of their faith and practice.

In the year 1689 we find it a church of great note, and at that time had four Elders or Pastors, and a large number of members. The Pastors, and a large number of members. The Pastors names were,

JOHN SEARLES, *Jun.*

THOMAS JARMAN.

GEORGE ELISS.

HENRY LONGLEY.

Of these persons we have no particulars.

Richard Hobbs. He was pastor of a congregation at Dover in the county of Kent. He was a worthy good man who suffered much for his religion. When a prisoner at Dover his piety and seriousness procured him liberty now and then, to go from his prison. Lord_s-days excepted. But upon his writing a letter to Dr. Hind, on the subject of baptism, the doctor instead of returning an answer, went to the Magistrates and stirred them up against him, who in a great rage sent the goal-keeper to fetch him from his house, with a charge to give no more liberty. Upon this treatment which was certainly an odd way to answer his arguments, Mr. Hobbs remarks, _Now consider how like these proceedings are to those beyond the seas at Rome, where if any do but question the truth of their worship, it is an hundred to one if they have not the inquisition for their pains. And doubtless such kind of proceedings do sound more like the Pope_s anathemas than in the least savour of a protestant spirit.

The letter he addressed to Dr. Hind is preserved by Crosby which is serious and scriptural, but as there is nothing particular in it, we shall not transcribe it.

Mr. Hobbs published a work in 1672, entitled, *The Quaker_s looking-glass looked upon, &c.* in reply to Luke Howard of Dover, a baptist who had turned Quaker.

There is some ground to believe that Mr. Hobbs was a particular baptist, as Mr. Prescott was pastor of the General baptist church from 1653 to 1658, and how long after we have no proof. Unless indeed Mr. Hobbs succeeded Mr. Prescott, and continued the pastor of this church till his death, when he may have been succeeded by Mr. Samuel Taverner.

Church at Dover.

Samuel Taverner, a man of great note for his piety and usefulness; was born at Rumford in the county of Essex, in July 1621. About the year 1643 he was made captain of a troop of horse; and on February 10, 1653, he received a commission from Oliver Cromwell, the lord protector, by which he was made governor of Deal-Castle. While in this situation he frequently conversed with Mr. Prescott of Guston, pastor of the church at Dover, and being convinced of the propriety of the baptist_s principles he soon after embraced them. He was baptized at Sandwich April 13, 1663, in all probability by Mr. Prescott.

It should seem that he lived at Dover after the restoration, as he was ordained Elder of the church there October 13 1681. He was greatly opposed and frequently taken from his meeting-house while preaching, and had before the magistrates, when he always bore a faithful testimony to the truths he professed. He suffered

greatly for his nonconformity. In November 1682, his persecutors came with a *false warrant*, and seized all that he had. He was at this time in business, and they carried away not only the goods out of his shop, but also as much of his household goods as they deemed worth removing, and acknowledged that they had so much that they knew not what to do with them. His interest was so great at court, that he was once committed to prison, but soon procured his liberty. He was at last obliged to leave Dover, and went to London, where he continued preaching as often and as publicly as the circumstances of the times would permit. While absent from his friends he wrote under some consolatory epistles to them, to encourage them under their trials. These, with about sixteen hymns, sung by him and his friends in prison, were long preserved in the family. A few years since Mr. Brent of Gravesend published a poem entitled, *Taverner's Ghost*, with the design of correcting some disputes in the church of which Mr. Taverner was the pastor. He survived the revolution, but where he preached at the latter part of his life is not said. He left this world for a better August 4, 1696, in the 76th year of his age. Mr. Knott, the present baptist minister at Chatham, says, he has no doubt but Mr. Taverner finished his course at Dover, and that he lies buried in the family vault in that town.

Church at Sandwich.

Respecting the sentiments of Mr. Taverner, Mr. Knott remarks, _I know from written sermons that I have seen that he was a general baptist; but he insisted decidedly on the total depravity of human nature_the freeness of grace in salvation by Christ, with the necessity of the New-birth. It is not difficult to account for his being baptized at Sandwich. Since my time, it was the general place for administering the ordinance for all the churches in the neighborhood, and was the joint property of several of them. Close by the meeting-house a stream, pent up in a narrow channel, by brick or stone work, flowed through the town to the haven; by an opening made it run into the baptistery, and out again, so that there was a continual supply of fresh water. I was baptized there in a very old meeting-house nearly 40 years since. It was soon after pulled down, and the baptistery had been sold to the proprietor of a neighboring Inn._

We know not who succeeded Mr. Taverner at Dover, but it is probable it was Mr. Robert Pyall who was minister of the church at Spilshill, and after an Elder of the church at Dover.

The particular baptists do not appear to have gained much footing in Kent, we have no certain proof of there being any church of these sentiments except at Sandwich. That there was one at this place is evident from the name of Thomas Fecknam appearing to the letters of the general Assembly both in 1689 and 1692. How long after Mr. Fecknam continued here we have no information. He was attended in 1689 to the Assembly by Edward Taylor, who was a messenger from the church but not a minister.

Lancashire

In the article of Mr. Christopher Blackwood, in Kent, it is said that he addressed one of his books to the churches in Lancashire. The little we know of these is as follows.

The labours of Mr. Gabriel Camelford, ejected from Stavely Chapel, Leicestershire, were remarkably useful in bringing sinners to Christ. The Baptist church at Tottlebank was formed by him August 18, 1669, on the congregational plan. It first met at the house of Mr. William Rawlinson of Great Tottlebank in the parish of Colton. There were at first but 7 persons, but they increased to 18 during the year, and were for a time, under the pastoral care of Mr. Camelford.

About eighteen years after, in May 1695, Mr. David Crossley was ordained pastor over them. He had been in London pastor of the church long under the care of the venerable Hansard Knollys, in which place we shall take some further notice of him. It is probable he was the first baptist minister at Tottlebank. There was another church at Hawkshead-hill. This was founded on the particular baptist plan the 15th of the 4th month, 1678. The person by whom it was collected and formed was Mr. John Ward, who resided in Muggleswick park on Darwenside, Durham. It is thought that he was a member of the church at Hamsterley, and that his acquaintance with mineralogy led him into the North parts of Lancashire. He was a Steward to the Proprietor of some lead-mines in Northumberland and Durham. Once in eight weeks he constantly preached the tidings of Salvation here, though he traveled nearly eighty miles to accomplish it. He lived till about 1727, and died in a good old age.

There was also a church at Warrington, and Mr. Thomas Loe, its pastor, attended the meetings of the general Assembly in London in 1689 and 1692.

Leicestershire

Public Dispute

It is likely that Mr. Samuel Oates was one of the first ministers who disseminated the principles of the Baptists in this county. There is a story told of him in Palmer's Nonconformist Memorial which, though improbable, we think it right to relate. It is said that Mr. William Sheffield, who was ejected from Ibstock, once held a public dispute with one Samuel Oates (father of Dr. Titus Oates) a popular baptist minister, who came into that country, and disturbed several congregations, dispersing challenges to dispute with any person of the subject of baptism. Several justices of the peace desired Mr. Sheffield to accept the challenge. He yielded to their request and Sir Thomas Beaumont was moderator. At the entrance of the dispute, which was held in Leicester castle, Mr. Sheffield protested that it was truth and not victory he aimed at; and that therefore if he could not answer the arguments brought against him, he would publicly acknowledge it. Mr. Oates also agreed to do the same. The dispute continued three hours, and was managed with great fairness and temper. At length Mr. Oates being pressed with an argument, was loudly called upon by the people present, either to answer it, or confess he could not. Upon this he frankly confessed that at present he could not answer it. The justices at the breaking up of the meeting, obliged Mr. Oates to promise, that he would no

more disturb the congregations in the county. _When it is recollected that this story is told by Mr. Oates opponents, and that the Justices were arbitrators, who were generally favourable to the Presbyterians, there will not be much credit attached to it. The reason probably of Mr. Oates being at a loss for an answer arose rather from the interruptions he experienced from the people loudly calling upon him, than from the argument it contained.

Persecution

The ministers we have heard of are as follows _

RICHARD FARMER, *Kilbey.*

RICHARD ADAMS, *Humberstone.*

JOHN St. NICHOLS,, *Lutterworth.*

JOHN SMITH, *Warlip.*

GABRIEL CAMELFORD, *Stavely Chapel.*

WILLIAM REEVE, -----

Richard Farmer. He was the pastor of a baptist congregation at Kilbey, and the intimate friend of Mr. Clarke and Mr. Shuttlewood, eminent ejected minister in this county. With these persons and Mr. Richard Adams he united in supporting a meeting at Loesby hall the house of Mr. Woolaston. Here they frequently kept days of fasting and prayer. He is said to have been a hard student, to have increased greatly in learning, a very affecting preacher; and to have often preached among the Independants. Having a small estate by which he was supported, he suffered greatly from the fines that were levied upon his goods, and they took from him in one year goods valued at 110 pounds! He died at Kilbey, where he was buried February 1, 1695, and ten shillings were paid by his widow for a mortuary to the vicar of Wistow, as a gift to his parish church, for a recompense of his personal tithes and offerings not paid in his life time.

Awful Providence

Mr. Richard Farmer, a Freeholder who polled for Kilbey in 1680 [?30] was his father. Crosby mentions some judgements that befel the persecutors of this good man, which deserve being recorded. He says _One of his informers who threatened him much, was at *Trinkly-Market*, and there boasted of what he had done against him, and declared that he hoped, before next Candlemas, this being at Christmas, he should get a good fortune for his daughter by informing: but as he was riding home, over a very boggy place, where there was a little brook, his horse threw him and he was drowned in a less quantity of water than could cover his body. Another one who swore falsely against him, quickly after had his tongue so swollen in his mouth that he died in consequence.

It is likely Mr. Farmer gave up the pastoral office of the church in his old age, as we find in 1689, Mr. Henry Coleman attended the general Assembly as pastor of the church at Kilbey, and Mr. Benjamin Winkles accompanied him. It is true Mr. Coleman might have been co-pastor with him, and Mr. Farmer be unable to take a journey to London. Mr. Coleman was here also in 1692, how much longer he continued we have no information. This was the only church in Leicestershire which sent Messengers to the general Assembly.

Oppressive Fines

Richard Adams. He was originally a member of the baptized church formed by Mr. John Tombes at Bewdly, and by that learned man was educated with Captain Boylton and Mr. Eccles for the ministry. It is probable that he obtained the living of *Humberstone* in this county by the favour of this Tutor and Pastor, who was one of the Triers appointed by Cromwell in 1653. From this parish he was ejected by the Bartholomew Act in 1662, and he afterwards married at *Mountsorrel*, where it should seem he kept a school for the support of his family. Here he set up a meeting in his own house. At first many persons were afraid to appear at it, but afterwards it greatly increased, and he continued it about fourteen years. Justice Babington, who though a sober man, was very zealous against the Dissenters, and oppressed them more than all the other justices in that county, was very severe against him. He fined him twelve pence per day, and sent to the officers of the parish to make distress for it. The officers were so troubled in conscience that they knew not what to do. At length upon the justice threatening them, they seized his pewter, and sent it to the pewterers, who refused to buy it. After this the justice sent for Mr. Adams, and told him he was not against his keeping a school, but if he would not leave off his meeting he must expect to be troubled. Soon after this the justice died of excessive bleeding. Mr. Adams after the death of Mr. Daniel Dyke in 1688, removed to London and became an Assistant to the excellent Mr. Kiffin at Devonshire Square. He is mentioned as co-pastor with him in 1692. It is said he lived till a great age, and some years before his death was disabled from preaching, and was assisted and succeeded by Mr. Mark Key.

A Noble Puritan

John St. Nicholas. He was ejected from Lutterworth in this county in 1662, when it is supposed he had been Rector about 12 years. Crosby says it was doubted whether he was a baptist, but Mr. Adams who lived within ten miles of him, said he was reported to be of that sentiment. He was an able scholar and had a good estate. He was born at Ash in Kent in 1604, and early in life embraced the sentiments of the Independants of that period. His first wife was Etheldreda, daughter and sole heir of Basil Goode, of Stretton under Fosse, Warwickshire. This lady died November 9, 1654, and was buried at Lutterworth. In June 1657 he united himself by a second marriage with the lady Priscilla, youngest daughter of Anthony, commonly called the good Earl of Kent, who was an old Puritan minister; and who when the title came to him, as heir of that noble family, was not to be prevailed upon, though pressed by many to quit the ministry, but held on officiating as usual, without being molested as he had often been before, on account of some failures in point of conformity. He died November 9, 1643, aged 86, and was buried

at Burbach. After Mr. Nicholas was ejected from Lutterworth, he retired to Burbach where he lost his second Lady in 1665. Here he lived secluded from the world to a good old age, and died at Burbach May 27, 1698, in his 95th year. His chief amusement was his library, and he used to the last to stile himself a student in St. Paul's Epistles. From an address prefixed to his History of Baptism, to the governors and ministers of the colonies in New England, it appears he had been in that country, as he speaks of himself as _An adventurer in the first plantation, as well as a sympathizer in their joys, fears, and sorrows._ He went to the public church as long as he was able to go abroad, though he was for many years so deaf he could hear nothing. When asked the reason, he said, it was to give an example to others, who if he should stay at home, might be encouraged to do so without a like excuse.

Ejected Minister

While Mr. Nicholas was Rector of Lutterworth, he joined with many others in the year 1659 in presenting an address to the Rump Parliament. This was entitled _The humble representation of divers well affected ministers of the gospel in well accepted. (Short View of the late Troubles in England. p 471) After his ejectment he laid aside his clerical function, and this accounts for his being called on his monument John St. Nicholas, Esq. This arose from his not having been episcopally ordained. On this account other ejected ministers are stiled *Gent*. It is said that the celebrated Dr. Philip Henry had the title of Esquire given him, as being in commission of the peace; when his clerical orders, not having been strictly orthodox, could not be *legally* recognized.

The works of Mr. Nicholas are, 1. *The Marrow of Sacred Dignity, drawn from the sacred scriptures, &c. 1642, 4to.* This was translated from the latin of Dr. Ames, and printed by the order of Parliament. 2. *The Widow's Mite.* 3. *An help to beginners in the Faith; containing explicatory questions upon the Creed, Lord's Prayer, &c.* 4. *The History of Baptism: or one Faith, one baptism, &c.* Dedicated to Anthony, Earl of Kent. By J. St. Nicolas, 1678. We have not been able to procure this History.

John Smith. He was ejected from *Wanlip* in this county; and is said to have been a very lively and solid preacher, and a man of an unblemished conversation, and very much beloved. He was sent down into the country by the *Triers*, and was presented to the living by --- Palmer, Esq. After his ejectment he took a small farm in Charley-forest [or Leicester forest] preached frequently when he had opportunity, and lived privately till he died. Mr. Ogle preached his funeral sermon at Diseworth in the same county. Mr. Smith was forced from his living before the act of uniformity; in consequence we suppose of the old incumbent being alive, who returned on the restoration of the King.

Mixed Communion

Gabriel Camelford. He was ejected from Stavely Chapel (on the borders of Lancashire). After his leaving this parish, he became (says Palmer) a useful preacher in the parts adjacent, and was an instrument in converting many, particularly in *Furness-fells* beyond the Sands, who afterwards formed themselves into a Dissenting church upon

the plan of mixed communion (being partly Independents and partly Baptists) on this remarkably catholic principle: *We declare ourselves willing and ready to receive into our communion all who love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity and truth,* &c. Mr. Camelford died in 1676.

Mr. Sedgwick, who succeeded Mr. Camelford, was pastor of this church upwards of forty years, and it continued on the same catholic plan. This account (says Palmer) was communicated by a son of the latter, Mr. John Sedgwick of Frome, who was himself a member of this church, and personally knew some of the aged persons converted by the ministry of Mr. Camelford. Mr. Camelford was the founder of the baptist church at Tottlebank in Lancashire, on the principle above stated.

Curious Debate

William Reeve. We have no information where he was settle, but we suppose somewhere in this county. Crosby says, _All I can obtain concerning him is this, that a little before, or after, the Revolution, a public dispute was appointed between him and a clergyman at the time appointed did not appear, alleging, that having no licence from the bishop he could not._ Having mentioned this dispute, Crosby adds, _This brings to my mind another dispute, which was prevented, but in a different manner, betwixt a Baptist minister and a Clergyman, which I had from Mr. Thomas Flower, a minister now deceased. The Clergyman came at the appointed time, but insisted that the dispute should be in Latin. The Baptist minister pleaded that it should be in English, that it might be to the edification of the auditory; but the Clergyman could by no means be prevailed upon to consent thereunto; and thereupon laid down the argument in *Latin*. The Baptist, being an Irish gentleman, replied in *Irish*. The Clergyman surprized at the learning of his antagonist, ingenuously confessed he did not understand *Greek*, and therefore desired him to reply in *Latin*. Well, says the Baptist, seeing you cannot understand *Greek*, I will not dispute in *Latin*, *let us consent to dispute in English* and leave the company to judge: but this not being complied with, the dispute was frustrated._

Lincolnshire

Ministers in Lincolnshire

The pious and venerable Hansard Knollys of London, was born at Chalkwell in this County. After returning from Cambridge University he was master of the Free school at Gainsborough. Receiving ordination from the Bishop of Peterborough, he obtained the living of Humberstone. While here he preached in many parishes besides his own, and often three or four times on the Lord's day. He frequently preached at Holton at seven in the morning; at Humberstone at nine; at Scarths at eleven; and at Humberstone again at three in the afternoon; besides preaching on every holiday and at every burial both of the poor and of the rich.

In this county also the eminently useful Henry Denne laboured, and was apprehended at Spalding for presuming to preach and baptize. The county goal at Lincoln

was the residence of many of the Baptist ministers after the Restoration. These we conclude were principally general baptists, as we have no certain account of any church of the Particular baptist denomination being founded here, notwithstanding the early and extensive labours of Mr. Knollys and Mr. Denne, who were both Calvinists. The ministers of whom we have any account are _

THOMAS GRANTHAM.

JOHN WATTS.

JOHN GREE.

ROBERT SHALDER.

SAMUEL OATES.

RALPH JAMES.

JOHN GREEN.

Thomas Grantham. With the history of this celebrated man almost all the events in relation to the Baptists in this country are connected. It appears that he descended from the ancient family of the *Granthams* in the county of Lincoln. He says, in the dedication to his *Primitive Christianity*, addressed to this noble family, _Though my extraction was immediately from poor kindred, yet such as were acknowledged by your progenitors,_ He began to seek the Lord very early, and made a public profession of faith by being baptized, and joining the baptist church at Boston when about 19 years of age: this must have been about 1652. He soon after began to preach to gospel to others which had been the power of God to his own salvation.

Reformation

In the year 1656, when Mr. Grantham was about twenty two years of age, he was chosen the pastor of a people which afterwards met at Northelm-Chapel. As the history of this collected from a manuscript of Mr. Grantham_s entitled *Christianitus restaurate*, or Christianity restored. From this it appears that about 1644, there were gathered a christian church in the South marshes of Lincolnshire: the members of which endured great persecutions in their names and substance, by unjust slanders and confiscations. The causes of this opposition were that they would not admit in baptism either *sponsors*, or the *sign of the cross*, though they still retained *sprinkling*. Being a pious and holy people, and zealous in the service of God, as they obtained further light, they proceeded in the work of reformation. The frequent alterations they made at last produced so much disunion, that in the year 1651, there were but four persons left who resolved to keep close by the scriptural rule respecting *baptism, by immersion on a profession of faith*. Mr. Grantham being acquainted with them, procured ministers to preach to them *publicly*, whilst himself exercised his own gifts among them *privately*. Through the

blessing of God attending the ministry of the word amongst them, they soon increased in number, and in 1656 chose Mr. Grantham their pastor as above related.

Mr. Grantham much Opposed

Being settled in a church state, like a very fruitful vineyard they grew and increased exceedingly both in gifts and graces, so that several persons were sent forth by them to preach the gospel.

By the labours of these the gospel was preached at Halton and many other places, and attended with great opposition, though at a period when no persecution was suffered by the government. They often received much rude treatment from mobs composed of *certain lewd fellows of the baser sort*; who interrupted them in their discourses, and sometimes dragged them out of doors and stoned them. They were particularly opposed by the Clergy, who by warrants brought Mr. Grantham and others, before the magistrates. Having nothing to support their charges but forged stories, the magistrates easily perceived the malice of their persecutors, and set them at liberty.

For several years while they continued at Northelm-Chapel, they endured the frowns, the scoffs and jeers of their enemies, and bore up under all opposition with great patience, and treated their rude adversaries with modesty and meekness.

After the restoration of Charles 11 sham plots were contrived in order to ensnare and arraign them, but without effect. At length Mr. Grantham was taken before a magistrate for preaching, who bound him over to appear at the Assizes held for the county of Lincoln. His people also were sorely harrassed by fines of £20 per month, for not attending the established church. In consequence of the severities that were exercised towards them they resolved to prepare a Memorial of their case, and by a petition to spread it before the King. This was written by Mr. Grantham, as also *a brief confession of faith* which was signed by 41 persons, ministers of the general Baptist denomination in the counties of Lincolnshire, Kent, Sussex, &c. in the name of more than 20,000 persons

Presents a Petition to the King

This Confession consists of 25 Articles, and is preserved by Crosby in the Appendix to his second Volume; from whose account it appears that this had been first printed in March 1659, and was now reprinted for the inspection of the King, and to inform all men of their innocent belief and practice. This may be seen also in Mr. Grantham's book, entitled, *Primitivus Christianismus*. Book II, p 62.

This Petition was presented as before stated to the King by Mr. Grantham and Mr. Joseph Wright of Maidstone. The king treated them very courteously, protested against the cruelty exercised on them by their enemies, and promised them that they should have their liberties, and accordingly set forth a declaration in their favour the 26th of December following. In consequence of this all of this denomination who had been indicted for

religion were at the next *Assizes* or *Sessions*, acquitted in open court, to the shame and vexation of their enemies.

The petition is very long and may be read in Crosby Vol II p 160-144, and concludes thus, _Now whereas we have given publicly an account of the former ages, in their carriages and behaviour towards persons differing in judgement in religious things; we take the liberty humbly to desire, and beg the same privilege as was granted unto the *Waderdopers* by the Prince and State of the Netherlands: which was to admit a public dispute between the ministers and the persons aforesaid, in the presence of the Prince, which we humbly conceive is a reasonable request._

Imprisoned

The quiet the church enjoyed under Mr. Grantham was not of long duration. On the Bartholomew act being passed in 1662, a Mr. Ridley a gentleman of property went to the meeting with an armed force, with a design to apprehend the people, but the soldiers beholding their innocent deportment refused to act, and left the place to the mortification of their leader. It is remarkable that Mr. Ridley after persecuting the Baptists several years became a bankrupt, was reduced to poverty, and died of the plague in London, leaving his wife and children totally destitute, who were cast on the parish, and some of them relieved by those very persons whom their father had persecuted. So signal were the divine judgements against those who were forward in opposing this church that many of them were strangely cut off, which produced such an effect on the minds of several persons that they gave glory to God, and were baptized.

In the summer of 1663 a pretended plot in the North, was devised by Lord Clarendon and his friends, who asserted that the fifth monarchy men, Anabaptists, Independents, and some Quakers were consenting to some desperate designs. A part of the storm occasioned by this pretence fell on Mr. Grantham and his friends, who were taken from their *meeting at Boston*, by some soldiers. The hearers were discharged, but Mr. Grantham, Mr. John Gree, and Mr. John Green, were lodged all night in a public inn: where the soldiers continued swearing and cursing almost incessantly, to the grief of Mr. Grantham, and his companions. In the morning they were conveyed to the goal at Lincoln and there confined till the *Assizes*, without any crime being laid to their charge.

Writes against the Papists

While Mr. Grantham was a prisoner, it was rumoured by some that he was a Papist, and several of the clergy who came to see him while in confinement affirmed to his face that he was a Jesuit. In order to put an end to this report which was an ordinary aspersion cast on the Baptists to bring their profession into contempt, Mr. Grantham published a controversy he had with a Roman Catholic; and entitled it *the Baptist against the Papist*. This was reprinted in 1678, and is part of his large work, to which we refer our readers, Book IV. This is addressed _to the nameless Author of seven queries, and in him to all the Sons of Papal Rome in the County of Lincoln._

During this confinement also, Mr. Grantham published a work entitled, *„The Prisoner against the Prelate: or a dialogue between the common goal of Lincoln and the Cathedral.* This book contains the reasons of separation from the Church of England, as by law established, as maintained by the baptized churches. „The argument (says Crosby) is close and nervous, though wrote in small verse, and contains about ten sheets in small octavo.„

After Mr. Grantham, Mr. Green, and Mr. Gree had been confined fifteen months, they were dismissed at the Assizes, no one having any thing to allege against them, they returned to the churches to which they belonged; who received them with inexpressible joy.

When the Conventicle act took place in 1664, another persecution came upon the churches in Lincolnshire, troopers and other soldiers were sent to disarm those who dissented from the established church. Though they found no arms in the possession of the Baptists, yet they rifled their houses, and took away their goods, and forced Mr. Grantham, Mr. John Gree, and several others, away from their wives and families, making them run along like *laqueys* by their horses' sides; nor would they tell them whither they designed to lead them, nor whether they should be prosecuted by law, or by military force.

Much Persecuted

Thus they were forced to go where the soldiers pleased, who dragged them from town to town, till night coming on they put up at an Inn, where they placed their prisoners in a lumber room, and tied them up so closely all night that they could take no rest; nor would the soldiers go to bed, but sat up near them and with profane oaths and imprecations made the place as much like hell as they could, to distress their pious and devout prisoners. When the morning arrived they took them away to *Louth*, and put them into the house of correction, and afterwards had them before the Committee for the county, who instead of charging them with any crimes, endeavoured to ensnare them by artful questions and wished them to take an oath that they would conform to the church of England. Some of the dissenters, it appears, conformed, but Mr. Grantham, and his friends, who suffered with him before, were enabled to stand in this evil day, and on their refusal were again sent to goal, where they lay six months. During this period the Assizes were held, but their enemies prevented their cause from being heard. When the quarter Sessions came they were brought before the justices, who refused to hear any thing about them or to recognize them as prisoners. Upon which the Sheriff said, that as he had produced them in open court, he was free from his charge, and on this they were all set at liberty.

Soon after this the enemies of Mr. Grantham attempted his ruin by bringing an action against him for beating and uncivilly using the wife of a person, who was enraged against him for baptizing her. The damages were laid at one hundred pounds, but to the

disgrace of his prosecutors, the cause at the next Assizes was thrown out of court as a *malicious* prosecution.

An Apostate

Mr. Grantham was a man of great fortitude and took every opportunity to defend the doctrines he professed against all opposers. An instance of his courage was given in the year 1669, which is thus related.

Mr. Robert Wright, who had been a baptist preacher, conformed to the church of England. He had been excluded from the baptists on account of his immoral conduct. After continuing several years in this course, by which he spent all his estate, he at last made application to the Bishop of Lincoln for some benefice, promising to renounce his principles of baptism, and preach against the Baptists. The Bishop accepted his offer, and granted him ordination. According to his engagement he preached violently against the baptism of believers, and recommended infant baptism. This was so agreeable to many of the people of the establishment, that they began to say from the impetuous discourses and daring pretences of this champion, that most, if not all, the ministers of the baptized churches would be easily overcome. The Baptists hearing this during the time of the Assizes at Lincoln, posted up four papers, containing a challenge or protestation against the said Mr. Wright, as follow:

_To the Citizens and inhabitants of the city and county of Lincoln, salutation.

Forasmuch as you have heard, that one Robert Wright, once a member of the churches reproachfully called Anabaptists, hath lately recanted his principles; in token whereof he hath preached publicly in the city of Lincoln, by allowance of the Bishop, or clergy of the same, to the great reproach of the truth, touching the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins: Know therefore, that if the said Robert Wright will accept of a friendly conference in the place where he preached, and shall give convenient and public notice of the same, he shall find some, if God permit, to maintain the doctrine of repentance to be from heaven, and the sprinkling and crossing of Infants to be man_s tradition.

His Fortitude

The 11th day of the 1st month (Vug March,) 1669.

Written by THOMAS

GRANTHAM,

Posted by WILLIAM PANN.

Two of these papers which were set above the hill, were taken down in them morning, and as was supposed, carried to the Bishop and the Judge; the other two below the hill were read by many; but in the afternoon were taken down by the clergy; who

threatened that they who wrote them should answer for it before the council table. However nothing was done except an angry ill-natured paper being written and sent to the Baptists by the Rev. Wm. Silverton, the bishop's chaplain; dated from *Scooby* August 6, 1670. By which it appeared how much he was chafed at the Baptists' proceedings; and it was well known that the Bishop himself [Dr. Barlow] was greatly disturbed. To check the confidence of Mr. Silverton, Mr. Grantham replied to his paper; which concluded thus: _Whereas Mr. Silverton saith, he will defend his propositions, it is hereby certified, that if he will either publish any thing upon the last two proposals, or dispute of them peaceably in a free audience, some of those whom he in the height of his wit calls *erroneous antick baptists*, are resolved in the strength of Christ, to hear and try that which he shall declare, time and place being convenient._

THOMAS GRANTHAM.

Religious Liberty

This Paper was delivered to Mr. Silverton by William Pann, but Mr. Silverton neither thought fit to enter into disputation, nor to make any reply by writing, _and so (says Crosby) his great boasting ended in a shameful silence._

When King Charles II published his *declaration of indulgence*, in 1671, granting liberty to the dissenters to meet and worship God according to the light of their consciences, without restraint or disturbance, provided their teachers were licensed, their doors set open, and they preached no sedition, Mr. Grantham accepted this liberty, and with another messenger, at the request of the churches in Lincolnshire, waited upon his majesty, with *an humble address or remonstrance*. In which, after praise to Almighty God, with thanks to his Majesty for the indulgence he had graciously afforded them of holding public assemblies for the worship of God; they plainly stated wherein they thought his royal declaration infringed that liberty, which as christians they had a right to _they beseech him to leave them to the light of scripture, with respect to the exercise of those spiritual gifts of prayer and preaching in their assemblies, according to their abilities for the edification of the church, where gifts are free; that they should continue in this practice, till they obtain his permission, assuring his majesty that no less liberty than the scriptures expressed would satisfy the church of God. And then they concluded with thanks to his majesty for all his lenity, praying that God would magnify grace in his princely soul, that whilst he reigned here on earth, he might excel in all true honor, and after this life enjoy a crown of immortality and a throne of glory in heaven.

Defamation

Mr. Grantham it is likely had less interruption after this, and appears to have been gratefully affected by everything favorable towards the dissenters, and especially by the liberty of worshipping God without interruption. In the chapter on Discipline, Book II, p 155, he says, _Whether heretics ought to be put to death seems now to be happily resolved in the negative, by his majesty Charles II and his honorable court of Parliament, Anno 1677. While by a public act they have worthily repealed the sanguinary laws, which

heretofore have been enacted to the great prejudice of Christianity; and particularly that fiery law, *De Heretico comburendo*. May his majesty and great council still proceed in such virtuous acts, to the glory of God, and their peace and true honour both here and to Eternity._

Mr. Grantham survived the reformation, and it appears he became a resident of the City of Norwich; but here though protected from fines and imprisonment by the act of toleration; he could not escape the persecution of the tongue. The implacable enemies of the Baptists singled him out as the object of their malice, _notwithstanding (says Crosby) he was a gentlemen so endowed with all moral and christian virtues, that many of his acquaintance were persuaded that he was equalled by few, and exceeded by none that lived in his day. His piety and usefulness however did not screen him from the voice of slander. Some said that he was a drunkard; others, a whoremonger; some, that he was a Jesuit; others, that he was a thief, and stole sheep and hurdles; and these his accusers were not only of the common people, but also men of reputation. Mr. Toothby, a gentleman, who had been a persecuting magistrate, though now out of commission, vented these slanders against him. Another of his enemies, Mr. John Willet, *Rector* of Tattershall in the county of Lincoln, declared in writing under his hand, _that he saw Mr. Grantham stand in the pillory two hours at *Louth* in Lincolnshire, for causing his man servant to fetch up seven sheep belonging to one of his neighbours, and to brand them with his own mark, &c.

Retraction

To refute so vile a slander Mr. Grantham brought the clergyman before Thomas Blofield, Esq. Mayor of Norwick, to whom with great humility he confessed his wickedness; and acknowledged that all was false which he had said, and subscribed against Mr. Grantham: and with crying and wringing his hands, and on bended knees, desired Mr. Grantham_s forgiveness. The Mayor declared it was the foulest thing that ever he had heard; that it was next to taking away Mr. Gantham_s life; severely rebuked the slanderer for his wickedness, which he said deserved a severe whipping; and further said that if he obtained forgiveness he would receive a very great kindness, and commanded his clerk to make a record of his confession; and ordered that the slandering priest should sign and seal it, which was done accordingly, and was as follows.

Settles at Norwich

Norwich,

_Whereas I, John Willet, late rector Tattershall, in Lincolnshire, did on the 2nd day of October 1691, wickedly and falsely certify, and subscribe, That Thomas Grantham, late of Lincolnshire, and now inhabitant of the city of Norwich, did, to my knowledge, stand in the pillory at *Louth* in *Lincolnshire*, two hours, for stealing sheep and hurdles; and that I did see him hold up his hand at the bar. And further I do declare, that I have not only wickedly abused the said Thomas Grantham, in all these things, but falsely accused Dr. Hillyard, Mr. John Connould, and Mr. Poke, in saying at Great Yarmouth, that I was

drawn to it, by the foresaid Dr. Hillyard, Mr. John Connould, and Mr. Poke, by giving me too much wine, and two shilling in money. And I further do declare, that what I said of Mr. Grantham, and subscribed, was false and from myself only; and that I drank but one glass of wine, at the Doctor_s aforesaid, and I believe that the Doctor supposing I was in want, did out of his christian charity give me two shillings. In witness whereof I have hereunto set my hand and seal, before Thomas Blofield, Esq. Mayor, the 6th day of October, Anno. Dom. 1691.

Sealed and subscribed before

Me Tho. Blofield, mayor

JOHN WILLETT.

When this was done, as the wretched slanderer had no money to pay the officer_s fees, Mr. Grantham, in addition to forgiving him, in order to prevent his going to prison for charges, gave the officer ten shillings to set him at liberty. This manifesting love to his enemy, and overcoming evil with good.

It does not appear in what year Mr. Grantham went to Norwich, but he was the founder of the general baptist church in that city. He died January 17th, 1692. His dying words were published in the general Baptist Magazine for November 1798, as follows_

Dying Words

Friends,

I am in a very weak condition, and as this is the sabbath with me, it will be the everlasting sabbath; for now I am going off the stage of this world, therefore I recommend you to the grace of God, that you would walk steadfastly in the faith, as by the grace of God I have done to this my life_s end; for by the grace of God I have not defrauded or polluted any person in the world; as now I am going to answer before God the Father; I came not among you for riches, or for honour; but to preach the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ; to spend and be spent for your good, both by preaching and printing; which words and works I recommend unto you, to strengthen you in the faith which I have preached, in which faith I live and die, which have been according to the gospel of Jesus Christ, in which I would have you stand steadfast to the end; not wavering, but fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life. I desire you, for the Lord_s sake, to walk together and keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace, as Christ hath commanded you; _Then are you my disciples if you love one another; beloved, build up yourselves in your most holy faith; praying in the Holy Ghost; keep yourselves in the love of God; looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ, unto eternal life;_ as I have told you before, submit yourselves to the will of God, and to every ordinance of man for the Lord_s sake; and give honour to whom honour is due, and walk peaceably with all men, and so shall no man have cause to speak evil of you. As for my part, since I have been amongst you, I have been made a scoff and a gazing stock of many people, which I freely forgive them all, and heartily pray that God would forgive them, and show them the error of their ways; and would desire that you would pray for

them and not seek any revenge. But to be short, I must leave you; do not grieve nor mourn for me, though I die, I shall rise to glory, where I desire we may all meet, and see one another's faces at the last day; knowing one another, and rejoice in glory, for I have conquered the infernal enemy by this faith, and have made the way plain and easy to me; and now I commit you to the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost by with you all, Amen.

Spoken in the presence of

JOHN MINGO.	THOMAS MILLER.
ANDREW PEGG.	JOHN CLARKE
WILLIAM SIDWELL	ALICE CLARKE.
THOMAS GAMBALL	ANN GRANTHAM.

Monument

Even at his death, his enemies threatened to remove his corpse, which was prevented by the clergyman of St. Stephen's church, the Rev. Mr. John Connould, permitting the body to be interred in the Middle Aisle of that church. An idea may be formed of the high estimation in which this good man was held by the monument raised to his memory by the following memorial in Golden Capitals, which is hung up in the Meeting house belonging to the general Baptists in the Priory of the White Friars, in the Parish of St. James in the city of Norwich.

A Memorial

Dedicated to the singular merits of

A faithful Confessor, and labourious servant Christ.

Who with Christian Fortitude, endured persecution

Through many perils, the loss of Friends and substance,

And ten persecutions for conscience sake.

A man endowed with every Christian grace and virtue,

The Rev. Mr. Thomas Grantham.

A learned minister of the Baptized churches,

And pious founder of this church of believers baptized:

Who delivered to King Charles II our declaration of faith
And afterwards presented to him a remonstrance against Persecution;
Both were kindly received, and redress of grievances promised.

He died xvii. Jan. MDCXCII, aged LVIII years.
And, to prevent the indecencies threatened to his Corpse,
Was interred before the West doors,
In the middle Aisle of St. Stephen's church, in this city;
Through the interest, and much to the credit of

The Rev. Mr. John Connould,
By whom, with many sighs and tears,
The burial service was solemnly read to a crowded audience;
When at closing the book, he added,

This day is a very great man fallen in our Israel;
For after their Epistolary dispute, in fifty letters, ended,
That very learned Vicar retained
The highest esteem and friendship for him whilst living,
And was, at his own request, buried by him, May MDCCVIII.

That Mr. Grantham was a very great man appears
In those letters, and in numerous printed works.
Also when engaged in Public Disputations,
Successfully displaying the well accomplished Logician:
For to such exercise of Skill and Literature
He was often called in that disputing age.

*Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord, yea, saith the Spirit,
They rest from their labours, and their works do follow them._*

His Works.

Mr. Grantham's principles work is entitled, *_Christianismus Primitivus: or the Ancient Christian religion, in its Nature, Certainty, Excellency and Beauty (Internal and External) particularly considered, asserted, and vindicated, from the many abuses which have invaded that Sacred Profession, by human innovation or pretended revelation. Comprehending likewise the general duties of mankind, in their respective relations, and particularly the obedience of all christians to Magistrates. And the necessity of christian moderation about things dispensable in matters of religion. With divers cases of conscience discussed and resolved. London. Folio. 1678._* The work contains several treatises which we suppose were first printed separately. As 1. *The Baptist against the Quaker.* 2. *The Padobaptist's Apology for the Baptized churches.* 3. *The Querist examined: or fifty Antiqueries seriously propounded to the people called Presbyterians.* He also published a work entitled *A Sigh for Peace, by the cause of division discovered.* 1672. This was occasioned by the controversy among the Baptists on laying on of hands. A work to which we have referred, and not mentioned by Crosby, is entitled, *_Hear the church, _ &c. London 1687.*

In addition to the works that have been mentioned as published by him, Crosby has preserved part of *_An Apology for the baptized believers, _ &c. written by Mr. Grantham, and said to be _presented to all pious and well disposed christians in the church of England._* This appears to be written with great ability and an admirable spirit; the first section is designed to remove mistakes respecting the principles of the baptists. The second contains *_A brief account of the reasons, why the baptized believers cannot conform to the ceremonies of the church of England._* 3. *_Concerning Discipline._* 4. *_Concerning the imposing of ceremonies, _ and concludes lastly with saying, _We are ready, in the preparation of our minds, to believe and practice whatsoever the catholic church, even of this present age, doth universally, and unanimously believe and practice. Qnod apud multum umon invenitur, non est erratum, sed tradition.* And though it be neither lawful, nor possible for us to hold actual communion with all sorts of christians in all things, wherein they vary from the truth; yet even in those things we hold a communion with them in our desires, longing for their conversion and re-union with us in truth._

We have seen two works besides his Folio Volume. One was printed in 1689, and we suppose written at this time, as there is no other date to it. This is entitled, *Truth and Peace: or The Last and most Friendly debate concerning Infant Baptism.* Being a brief Answer to a late Book, entitled, *The Case of Infant Baptism;* written by a Doctor of the Church of England. In which answer is shewed, 1. *_That the covenant of Circumcision (strictly taken) was not the covenant of grace for the salvation of mankind, man being not bound to observe it.*

2. *That circumcision was no gospel ordinance, (as is affirmed by the Doctor) but a part of the yoke of bondage.*

3. That the Jews had a tradition to baptized infants, is either a fable, or destruction to the christian baptism, if founded thereon.

4. The Doctor_s five comprehensive questions particularly answered.

5. From the whole it is made evident, that the restoration of sacred baptism, in respect of the true subject, and due manner of administration, is the only true method to revive the ancient christian religion in all nations, where it has been corrupted by human Innovation. Whereunto is annexed a brief discourse of the sign of the Cross in Baptism; and of the use of the Ring, and bowing at the Altar, in the solemnization of Marriages.

The custom of baptizing infants was brought in without the commandment of Christ. *Curcellæus Disserta. of Orig. Sin. n. 56.*_

This long titled page is prefixed to a small quarto Volume of 91 pages, 73 of which are on the subject of baptism. Respecting this, he says in the preface, _I have entitled my book (as you see) The last and most friendly debate concerning infant baptism. And glad should I be to see an end of the controversy, by an agreement in the truth, in a brotherly condescension in such things on either part, as may be without sin.

That I have undertaken this task was not the fruit of my own choice, but indeed I was particularly desired by letter from some persons of quality and learning, to give a brief and distinct answer to the contents of the *case of infant baptism*; which the commend for the temper in which it is framed, and for that it is very nervous in argument; insomuch that till it was answered, it was so satisfactory, that more need not be said on their part. And now, I hope, they will do me the justice, as to read me with patience, and to judge without prejudice, knowing that shortly we must all appear before the judgement seat of Christ, and receive from him the things done in the body whether it be good or bad.

The Postscript to this work consists of four sections. 1. Of the manner of the marriages among the baptized believers, and that they are warrantable by God_s law.

2. The law of the land does not null or make void the marriages of the baptized believers, but does rather establish them.

3. Of the most important question touching the case depending, viz. Whether it be necessary that marriages should be celebrated by the minister? and whether they may be valid and lawful without them?

4. Of the Rituals of the Church of England concerning marriage, and the reasons why the baptized believers comply not with them._

Marriage Ceremony.

The contents of this postscript are remarkably curious, but as it does not accord strictly with the design of our work we do not insert it. For the gratification of the curious, however, we have given an extract in a note. (Some of the Baptized Believers having been prosecuted as Offenders, for not conforming to the Ceremonies of the Ring, and kneeling to the Altar in the Celebration of Marriage; we shall therefore humbly offer our reasons why we dissent from these ceremonies; and why also our Marriages are good in the Eye of the Law, [for the substance of them] the omission of these ceremonies, &c. not withstanding.

But the first Reader is desired to take notice, that we are not against, but for the publick solemnization of Marriage according to the Law of the Land, save that there are

some ceremonies, used therein which we cannot comply with. And because some of the Priests will not marry us at all, and others will not do it, unless we conform to all the ceremonies required in the Service-book; this puts us upon a necessity to have it done without them, and the manner thus:

The Parties to be married being qualified for that State of life, according to the Law of God, and the Law of the Land, as to the Degrees, &c. therein limited; they call together a competent number of their relations and friends: and having usually some of our Ministry present with them, the Parties concerned do declare their contract formerly made between themselves, and with the advice of their friends, if occasion require it: *And then taking each other by the Hand, so declare, That they from that day forward, during their natural Lives together, do enter into the State of Marriage, using the Words, or the substance of them, which are appointed for the Words of Marriages in the Service-book, [as acknowledging them Words to be very fit for that purpose.] And then a Writing is signed by the Parties married, to keep in memory the contract and covenant of their Marriage, to this effect:*

These are to testify to all men, that we A. B. of, &c. and C. D. of, &c. have, the day of the date hereof, entered into the covenant State of Marriage, according to a solemn Contract heretofore made between ourselves, and with the consent of such as are concerned in order thereunto: And we do now, in the presence of Almighty God, and the Witnesses hereafter named, ratify the said Contract and Covenant- Act of Marriage this day verbally made; in both which we do, in the Fear of God, mutually and solemnly, and for our Parts respectively promise, in the strength of God, to live together in the State of Marriage, according to God's Ordainer from this day forward, to love each other as Husband and Wife, and faithfully to perform all the Duties to which we are bound by God's Law, and the good Laws of the Land, in that Case provided, till the Lord by Death shall separate us. In Testimony whereof we have hereunto set our Hands, the day of, &c.

Then is annexed a Certificate of the Witnesses, thus:

WE whose Names subscribed, do testify, That the above-said A. B. and C. D. the Day and Year above-said, did mutually take each other into the State of Marriage, acknowledging the Contract and Covenant, and ratifying the same by Word, and by the Subscription thereof as above-said. In Witness whereof, we do hereunto set our Hands the Day and Year above-said.

After these things, some suitable Counsel or Instruction is given to the Parties [but no Man takes upon him the office to marry any, that being the proper Act of the Parties, themselves] and then Prayer made to God for his blessing upon the Parties married, &c.)

From Palmer's Nonconformists' Memorial we find that Mr. Grantham was written against by Mr. John Home of Lynn in Norfolk, and by Mr. Martin Fynch, Pastor of an Independent church in Norwich.

Life and Death of Mr. Oates.

Samuel Oates. His name has been frequently mentioned in the course of our history. He was a very zealous itinerant preacher in the Counties of Surry, Hampshire, Essex, &c. His sufferings at Chelmsford, where he was imprisoned and tried for his life,

are noticed in our first Volume. It should seem that after this he became minister of a Baptist church in Lincolnshire, but where it is not said. He was a popular preacher and great disputant, and probably the same who disputed with Mr. Sheffield in Leicester Castle, mentioned in the history of that county.

Crosby says, that after the Restoration, he had a great place offered him by the Duke of York, which temptation prevailed with him to conform. He had the living of Hastings in the county of Sussex; but some time after his conscience smote him; he left his living and returned to Mr. Lamb's congregation, to which he originally belonged. Here he continued till his death, which was about five or six years afterward. (Crosby Vol. III. p. 59, 60.)

John Watts. He was pastor of a baptized church which met in his own house, somewhere in this county. He had been educated at one of the Universities, but because of his objecting to the ceremonies and customs of the Established church he obtained no preferment. After leaving the University he became a member of Mr. Grantham's church, by which he was sent forth into the ministry. Crosby says, he was _a person very eminent, of honest repute, and of good note in those parts._ The South Marshes of Lincolnshire are the parts intended, but the particular place is not mentioned.

Mr. John Gree, and Mr. John Green, mentioned in the account of Mr. Grantham, were baptized ministers, and pastors of churches in this county, but when we know not, nor have we any particulars concerning them.

An Awful Story.

Ralph James. He was pastor of the Baptist church at North-Willingham in this county. He was engaged in a controversy with the Quakers, and in some way had declared his testimony to the truth, and his opposition to their errors. This so enraged one Richard Anderson, a Quaker, who lived at Panton in this county, who had imperiously assumed to himself the character of a prophet sent from God, that he denounced a heavy judgement upon Mr. James in the awful name of God. This was that he should become a leper from head to foot for his opposing the spirit of the Quakers, or their light within; adding, at the same time, that is he was deceived, the self-same plague should befall himself and family. It is very remarkable, but it came to pass, in a little time, that Anderson and his family were all leprous. In this extremity of pain and anguish, Anderson came to Mr. James, begging and intreating his prayers to God on his behalf, that he might be relieved from that heavy judgement. Accordingly Mr. James and his congregation kept days of fasting and prayer for him, and God was graciously pleased to hear their supplications and to heal him and his family: this Anderson freely acknowledged.

This surprising instance, with two others of the like kind, were soon after printed under the title of *A true and impartial narrative of the eminent hand of God that befell a Quaker and his family*. This was replied to by Thomas Rudyard an Attorney, in a pamphlet entitled, *The Anabaptist's lying wonder*. This was answered in another pamphlet entitled, *The Quaker's subterfuge, or evasion overturned*, wherein (says Crosby) the truth of the foregoing narrative was further confirmed and established.

We have no means of judging between these disputants, nor is it now of much consequence, as the people commonly called Quakers would as much condemn such

enthusiasm as we can do. But we apprehend such daring appeals to the divine Being were at that time often made by some of their Speakers. This is evident from the conduct of John Whitehead towards Mr. Grantham, who thus addressed him, when he could not answer his arguments. _Here (says Mr. G.) he would not answer me by any means, but instead thereof cursed me in these words: *Thou whited wall, God shall smite thee; the plagues, the cursed, and vengeance of God is thy portion*: giving his head and hand two or three motions. When he had thus done, I replied, John, I am taught of God not to render railing for railing, cursing for cursing, but contrary blessing; and therefore I desire this folly may not be laid to thy charge._ (*Baptist against the Quaker*, p. 61)

We conclude our account of this County by the following remarks from Crosby.

The steadiness, zeal and piety of the Baptists in Lincolnshire, created them many enemies who endeavoured to exterminate them, they wrote a small piece, but which was never published, entitled, *The Baptists' complaint against the persecuting priests, &c.* This was drawn up by Mr. Grantham, and Crosby wrote the account that follows from the manuscript, which on account of the information it contains we think it right to present to our readers.

_Although we acknowledge ourselves sundry ways obliged to honour many of the Church of England; yet seeing some of them are so evidently of a persecuting spirit, as that they daily seek our ruin, both by persecuting us themselves, and by stirring up those who are in authority to trouble us, by imprisonment and seizure of our goods, we are therefore constrained to exhibit this our just complaint; and the rather because we have faithfully endeavoured to obtain peace and brotherly concord with them, both by our friendly deportment, and by proposing in a more public manner, such things in our friendly epistle to the bishop and ministers of the church of England; as also in our apology for the baptized believers, as does, we trust, sufficiently evidence, that here is nothing more dear to us than truth and peace, with all that call on the name of the Lord Jesus Christ.

_To complain against any out of a peevish humour, or as murmuring at their prosperity, because we cannot have our own wills, is a temper below a christian. But to complain against malicious, debauched, and cruel practices, is part of the work of those who are to bear a testimony for God. After Job had suffered many things of the Chaldeans, who spoiled him of his substance, he makes his moan this: *Even to-day is my complaint bitter, my stroke is heavier than my groaning.* And the Psalmist thus: *I poured out my complaint before him, I shewed before him my trouble, there was no man that would know me, no man cared for my soul. In the way wherein I walked have they privily laid a snare for me.* And Job again, *As for me is my complaint to man? And if it were so, why should not my spirit be troubled?*

_Now our case being, as we believe, much like the case of these good men, we do also make our just complaint; that we live among those, who by their place should be men of peace and meekness, but are far otherwise; so haughty that a man can scarce tell how to speak to them; and when we speak of truth and peace, they are for war, bitterly calling us *damned fanatics* and heretics, even in their pulpits; only because we dissent from them in some things, which the most learned confess, have neither precept nor precedent for them in the word of God.

_We have borne the unkind usage of many of our country-men, and of persecuting priests in particular, for more than *thirty* years. But in the time of Cromwell_s

usurpation, they did then hale us before their judgement seats, because we could not worship God after the will of their *Lord Protector*; for so they stiled him in their articles against us. And we had then our goods taken away, and never restored to this day.

_And lest the reader should here suppose we provoke these men, by withholding their dues. Let him know that we gave them their demands as well as any, and perhaps from better principles than some others. For we consider that when we hire, or purchase land, the *tenth* is excepted and so not ours. But yet, it is also to be considered, that they were not given to maintain men in drunkenness. Lording, and persecuting those who fear God, merely because they dissent from these days; by which unreasonable practices, they outdo the false prophets which were of old; for they prepares war against those, that did not put into their mouths; but these devour those that labour to maintain them.

_Nor shall we as yet make a particular rehearsal of the sufferings of the *baptized* believers in this nation, having learned with *Jerome* to say, _If at any time for the commandment of God, and the verity of faith, the priests or false prophets, or foolish people be angry with us, let us not esteem or make any account of it, but let us keep the commandments of God; not thinking on our troubles which are present, but beholding the goodness to come._ Let it suffice them, that we briefly touch, or reflect upon the things which have come upon us in one county only, though we are but few in number, and generally poor men, because there may be a more general account of these things transmitted to posterity. And:

1. _We have sustained no less than the imprisonment of one *hundred persons*, some y the writ *de capiendo*, others by the writ *qui tam*: some for hearing, others for preaching the word of God; not any man amongst us being in any ways concerned in plotting, or any misdemeanor, against our lord the king; for whom we give thanks to God, with prayer, that he may have a long and happy reign over us.
2. _We have born the trial of no less than *three hundred* levies, some from 60, 40, 20, and 10 pounds, and some for 2 pence per week, which by the often repetition of them, have weakened many poor men, and caused some to remove their habitations.
3. _Indictments at the assizes and sessions, upon the *statute for 2 pence per week, and twenty pounds per month*; we have had the trial of no less than a *thousand*, which had been no small charge to those who have been prosecuted there.
4. _Presentments and excommunications in the commissary courts, we have had some hundreds, to the great prejudice, as well as charge, of many of us; with many other particular vexations from private persons, not here to be inserted. And yet we trust we may humbly use the words of the Psalmist, *All this is come upon us, yet have we not forgotten thee; neither have we dealt deceitfully in they covenant*. But these things have contributed, in general, to our more full assurance that he truth is with us, in the things wherein we dissent from those who persecute us. And in this holy confidence we hope to *pass through the valley of the shadow of death*, if our God shall call us to it. For we believe, and are sure, to persecute is no mark of the true faith, but to suffer persecution is so; and that religion is not worth professing in a time of prosperity which is not worth owning in the time of the greatest trouble.

In this piece they observe that two strange doctrines were spread abroad in their day, viz. That there was no such thing as passive obedience for the cause of religion. That kings are so far *infallible*, as that what religion they establish is the true worship of God in their dominions. These strange doctrines (say they) were thrust into the *common almanacks*, and were very much enlarged upon. To these they first replied, That the first could not be true, because it condemned the generation of the just in all ages, from righteous *Abel* to the present day; who, it is certain, did suffer all kinds of torment on account of religion, and *committed themselves therein to Almighty God in well-doing, as into the hands of a faithful Creator*. And also that it did then condemn the Lord of life and glory himself, *who learned obedience by the things which he suffered*. And further that it did condemn the doctrine of the gospel, which teacheth all christians to suffer patiently, assuring the professors of it, *that all that will live godly in Christ Jesus must suffer persecution, and that they must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God*. Neither could the second doctrine be true, say they, unless truth and falsehood be the same thing, when diversified only in respect of place. For do not some kings establish heathen idolatry, or the worship of false and many gods, some Turcism, some Popery, and some the Protestant religion? Are not these religions in many things palpably contradictory? And is it possible of all these things to be the true worship of God? Surely the very mention of such doctrines as these, is a sufficient confutation of them.

From the work of Mr. Grantham, entitled, *_Christianismus Primitivus,*_ we learn that the enmity of the people against the baptists in Lancolnshire was so great, that they were denied the privilege of the common burying places. Yea (says he) so inhuman hath been the usage of some, that they have been taken out of their graves, drawn upon a sledge to their own gates and there left unburied. Thus did the inhabitants of Croft in the county of Lincoln, deal by one Robert Shalder, a baptized believer, in the year 1666, to the infamy of the vile doers of that cruel act; while this epitaph lives, to keep in memory their cruel action.

_Sleep, pious *Shalder*, sleep in thy sequestered grave,
Christ_s faith thou well didst keep, maugre the fiercest wave.
Which Satan_s storms could raise against thy faith; and now
In vain he findeth ways, his malice still to shew.
Thy Saviour had no grave but what a friend did lend;
Enough, if the servant have, like favour at the end.
And now thy faith divine, I_ll pin upon thy hearse,
It bright through brief doth shine; in Heb. vi. 1 and 2 verse._

This Mr. Shalder had suffered much by imprisonment for his zeal towards God, and died soon after his release from prison; and was interred in the common burying ground with his ancestors. The same day that he was buried, he was taken up in the manner that has been related; and to express their indignant feelings they drew the corpse upon a sledge to his garden gates and left it there, till it was secretly buried in the *sequestered grave* of one of his friends.

Some of his friend also wrote some verses which were entitled, *_The Dead Man_s complaint,*_ and place them on the empty grave; with the design (says Crosby) to check the envy of the *spiritual* court, which had thus disgraced the dead. From this it appears that it did not arise from the private resentment of his ungodly neighbors; but from the inexorable and pitiful malice of the clergy. The following is a part of them.

_Your sad presenting men alive or dead,
What text will warrant? Where can it be read?
That the Church of Christ did ever this proceed
Against any man! Oh then behold your deed!
Whilst you pretend to christianity,
You prove that you have no humanity:
Let *Croft* beware, if she behave her thus,
Her actions prove most sadly ominous;
Of some impending evils.
On them or theirs, for as the Lord is just,
He _ll plead his servants_ cause, though in the dust
They lie without regard from men. For he
Accounts they touch the apple of his eye;
Who toucheth his. Nor shall it long time be,
Ere I your faces at his throne shall see;
And then implead you at his awful bar,
For that which you have done. Oh! then prepare,
For death waits on you as he did on me
To bring you to the same mortality._

The chief persons in this inhuman transaction, were two men whose names are not mentioned; and who did not long survive it. One of them died suddenly, and the other languished for some time, being greatly terrified with the remembrance of what he had done to the dead.

By the remarks of Mr. Grantham on this transaction it appears that it was common at that time for christian burial to be refused to the Baptist. _For any (says he) to make it unwarrantable for the baptized churches to bury their dead among their neighbors, though of differing opinion in point of religion, is gross vanity; and it were as idle, as to say we may not dwell in one house or city together; nay much more absurd for the dead know nothing, cannot injure one another, but the living may._

London and Middlesex.

Reformation.

We have attempted in the first Volume of our work to produce evidence that the principles of the Baptists were at all times, since the introduction of the gospel into England, held by persons who were opposed to the superstitions and will-worship of the corrupt Church of Rome.

It is highly probable that many of these resided in the Metropolis, as the situation and circumstances of its inhabitants were more favorable to free enquiry, and to the exercise of private judgement in the worship of God, than those of persons who resided in the Country.

At the Reformation the general terms Wickliffites and Lollards which had been applied to all the Dissenters from the Church of Rome, seem to have been changed for

that of Anabaptists; which if it does not prove they were all opposed to Infant-Baptism (as general terms are not always distinguishing) it is certainly evidence, that there were many persons who, in the opinion of their enemies, were guilty of the crime of *re-baptizing*.

Opposition to Baptists.

From the spirit of the times, which was still popish, though King Edward had ordered that the word Papa should be put out of their Church books, (Articles of Visitation, II of king Edward VI by Archbishop Cranmer. Sparrow_s Collection.) it is certain they were obliged to act with all the secrecy possible, in opposing the ecclesiastical authorities. They were, however, so publick in 1550 as to excite the attention of the rulers of the national reformed church. In the Articles of Visitation of Bishop Ridley, published this year, to furnish the Clergy with matter *to be enquired into in the Visitation of the Diovesse of London by the Reverend Father of God Nicholas, Bishop of London*, it is enjoined in the 15th question, *_Whether any of the Anabaptist sect, or others, use notoriously any unlawful or private Conventicles, wherein they do used doctrine, or administration of Sacraments, separating themselves from the rest of the parish._* And in the 19th Article, *_Whether any speaketh against Baptism of Infants._* If the reader will turn to Vol. I. p. 88, he will discover what events gave occasion to these enquiries, and also that it was intended by these vererable Reformers, to make all persons conform to the sentiments which they had declared to be the perfect model of doctrine and discipline.

The system of delivering over to the secular power, those who were sufficiently bold to avow their dislike of the national creed, was rigidly adhered to, both in this and the two succeeding reigns, and as much so by Protestants, as by Papists. The cruel statue of Elizabeth, at the close of her reign, ordering all Anabaptists to depart the land, must have exceedingly reduced their number in England, as all who were zealous for the principles of Puritanism, especially ministers, were either obliged to flee into Holland, be shut up in prison, or deprived of life.

Many of these returned, and in the year 1615, perhaps several years earlier, we find they had formed a separate church of the Baptist denomination in London. The ministers of this Church were Mr. Helwisse; and Mr. John Morton. See Vol. I. p. 122. Of Mr. Morton we shall speak in another part of our work.

Baptists of two descriptions.

It is well known that a distinction has always been maintained between the General and Particular Baptists. Their principles on the doctrines of *Personal Election* and *Final Perseverance* being so widely different, they have always formed two distinct bodies; their churches having no fellowship, nor their ministers any association. In treating of the baptist churches in London, we shall observe this distinction, and shall first treat of

The Particular, or Calvinistic Baptists.

The first church of which we have any particulars was founded in 1633. Some others were soon after collected, and in 1643, or 1644, a Confession of Faith was published in the name of *seven* churches in London. We have mentioned an Edition of this work, Vol. I. p. 175, published in 1646, which was presented to the two Houses of Parliament. This was signed by 13 English, and 2 French Ministers. The first Edition had the signatures of 15 Ministers, but not of all the same persons. (*Pagitt's Heresiography*. Ed.3,p.39.)

The following is the order in which the signatures were placed in the first edition.

Mr. William Kiffin.

Mr. Thomas Patience. [or Patient.]

John Spilsbury.

George Tipping.

Samuel Richardson.

Thomas Skippard.

Thomas Munday.

Thomas Gunne.

John Mabbat.

John Webbe.

Thomas Kilcop.

Paul Hobson.

Thomas Gore.

Joseph Phelps.

Edwards Heath.

Particular Baptists.

In this list there are five persons who are not mentioned in that of 1646, viz. *Thomas Skippard, John Mabbat, John Webbe, Joseph Phelps, and Edward Heath*. In the

other there are five names which are not in this. viz. *Hansard Knollys, Benjamin Coxe, Thomas Holmes*, and the *French Ministers*, of whom, or of their church, we know nothing.

(A third Edition of this Confession was printed in 1651. To this is added, *_Heart Bleedings for Professors abominations; or a faithful general Epistle [from the same churches] presented to all who have known the way of truth, forewarning them to flee security, and careless walking under profession of the same, discovering some of Satan_s wiles, whereby also wanton persons and their ungodly ways are disclaimed._*

The *_Address to the Reader,_* has the following signatures.

William Kiffin.	Joseph Patshall.
John Spilsbury.	William Conset.
Joseph Sanson.	Edward Harrison.
Hugh Gosnell.	Richard Graves.
Thomas Pault.	Edward Roberts.
Thomas Waters.	Henry Forty.
Thomas Young.	John Watson.)

We are not certain where these seven churches assembled; but we know there were at this time *Mr. Keach_s Church*, Devonshire Square; *Mr. Spilsbury_s* at Wapping; *Mr. Knolly_s* in Great St. Helens; *Mr. Hobson_s* in Crutched Friars; *Mr. Barber_s* in Bishopsgate Street; *Mr. Lamb_s* in Coleman Street; and the church at the *Glass House*, or *Glazier_s Hall*. (See Vol. I. p.p. 138, 139, 160, 226.) We take it these were the churches who published this Confession, though we cannot ascertain the ministers who belonged to each of them.

Confession of Faith.

It is to this first Edition that the bitter Presbyterian Edwards refers, when he says of Mr. Kiffin, *_His name is underwritten first to the Confession of Faith of the seven Anabaptistical churches, as the Metropolitan of that fraternity._* That Mr. Kiffin was a principle person among them we have no doubt; though we are very certain he assumed no ecclesiastical domination. It was, perhaps, to avoid the appearance of this that his name in the subsequent Edition followed that of many of his brethren.

From many considerations it will not be improper to begin with the history of this remarkable person, and of the church collected by his ministry. On account of the early period at which he untied with the denominations; the purity of his principles; the many

services he rendered the Baptists by his influence with the government; and the active part he took for upwards of sixty years, in every thing which occurred respecting them; he seems to be entitled to the honorable appellation of the Father of the Particular Baptists.

He joined the Independent church under the pastoral care of Mr. Lathorp when very young. He was particularly engaged in the disputes which happened in this Society on the subject of baptism, and being convinced of the impropriety of *Infant-baptism*, left it in 1638, and united with *Mr. Spilsbury's* people. Soon after a separation took place in this church also, on occasion of a dispute, on the propriety of suffering ministers to preach amongst them who had not been baptized by immersion! Mr. Kiffin was at the head of those who opposed this principle, and an amicable secession took place, it is supposed soon after 1640, when the church, which still assembles in Devonshire Square was founded, and he became their Pastor. He presided over it till the time of his death 1701, in the 86th year of his age! It is not exactly known when their first meeting-house was built; but the present house was opened for divine worship, March 1, 1686. The former place stood on the same site, and is supposed to have been erected a little before the Protectorate of Cromwell. After the fire in London it was forcibly taken possession of, and used as an Episcopal chapel till the proper owners.

Biography of Mr. Kiffin.

The account we are about to present the reader, is derived from a manuscript written by Mr. Kiffin. It is probable he was a native of London, and born in the year 1616. His parents were persons in good circumstances, but he lost them at an early age. This event, though painful, stood connected with that series of remarkable providences which attended him through his long and tedious pilgrimage. He says, _Being arrived at old age, I thought it my duty to leave behind me some of those footsteps of his grace and goodness towards me._ As this is the only monument preserved of this truly excellent man, we think it right to give it in his own words.

Origin of his Religious Impressions.

_The first eminent providence (says he) I observed from the Lord towards me was in the year 1625, when that great plague was in London which swept away my relations; and being myself but nine years old, I was left with six plague sore upon me: nothing but death was looked for by all that were about me. But it pleased God of his great goodness to restore me; and being in the hands of such friends as remained alive, I was taken care of by them; although they sought their own advantage, possessing themselves of what was left to me; of which, on account of their failing in business, I never enjoyed but little.

_Being in the year 1629, put apprentice to a mean calling, I continued till the year 1631 without any sense of the great deliverance I had received from the hand of God. At which time being 15 years of age, I began to consider the mean circumstances I was in, and began to grow melancholy. One morning, very calmly, I went away from my master without any just reason being given by him. While I was wandering up and down the

streets, I passed by St. Anathema's Church, where I saw people going in, on which I returned and went in also. Mr. Foxley was preaching upon the fifth commandment and shewing the duty of servants to masters. At this I greatly wondered, as thought he knew me and was preaching only to me. This had such an effect upon my mind, that I immediately returned to my master's and no one observed my having gone away. This sermon dwelt very much upon my thoughts, and provoked in me a desire to hear those who were called *Puritan* ministers. Soon after I heard Mr. Norton (who preached at that place in the mornings) from *Jer.57:18. There is no peace, saith my God, unto the wicked.* In this sermon he shewed what true peace was, and that no man could obtain it without an interest in Jesus Christ. This made a great impression on me, as I was convinced I had not that peace, and how to obtain an interest in Christ I knew not; this occasioned great perplexity to my soul. Every day I saw myself more and more vile and sinful. Pray I could not; and believe in Christ I could not. I thought myself shut up in unbelief, and although I desired to mourn under a sense of my sins, yet I saw there was no proportion suitable to that evil nature, which I found working strongly in my soul. I resolved to attend the most powerful preaching, which I accordingly did, and many times obtained some relief from seeing a possibility, that notwithstanding my sinful state I might at last find mercy. I now determined to leave sin, and although to will was present with me, yet how to perform I had no power.

Deep Convictions.

—It pleased God after some time, I heard Mr. Davenport, in Coleman Street, from *I John 1:7. The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.* He shewed from this efficacy of the blood of Christ, both to pardon and cleanse from sin; and answered many objections that the unbelieving heart of man would make against that full satisfaction which Jesus Christ had made for poor sinners. I found many of these were such as I had made in my own heart, as the sense of unworthiness, and desire to be better before I applied to Christ for salvation, with many others of the same kind. This sermon was of great satisfaction to my soul, and I thought I felt my heart greatly to close with the riches and freeness of grace, which God held forth to sinners in Jesus Christ. I found my fears vanish, and my heart was filled with love to Jesus Christ. I saw sin viler than ever, and found my heart more abhorring it. I soon after heard Mr. Norton preach from *Luke i. 69. And hath raised up an horn of salvation of us in the house of his servant David.* From this he shewed that Jesus Christ was mightily accomplished with power and ability to save his people.

Believes in Christ.

My faith was exceedingly strengthened in the fullness of that satisfaction which Jesus Christ had given to the Father for poor sinners: and was enabled to believe my interest therein. I now found some ability to pray and to meditate upon the riches of this grace, so that I could say with David, *When I awake I am still with thee.* I found the power of inbred corruptions destroyed, and my heart on fire with holy love to Christ! Being young, and knowing little of the deceit of my own heart, I thought I should never find the power and strength of sin and corruption rise in my heart any more, and much

wondered when I heard ancient christians so much complain of the strength of sin that they found daily in their souls. In this frame of peace and rest, I continued for near three months; rejoicing in the grace of God, and was ready to say that by his favour he had made my mountain so strong that I should never be moved. But a new storm began to arise in my soul; I found my confidence in God abate, my comforts to lessen, and the motions of sin to revive with greater strength than ever. Every duty I performed my heart was so carnal that it was a burden to me; by reason of which I was a burden to myself. Yet I dared not omit the performance of any duty, having some secret hopes, though attended with many fears, that the Lord would not utterly cast me off. I was daily questioning whether all I formerly enjoyed was any more than a *taste of the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come*, which those experienced who had yet fallen away.

His mind relieved.

Many weeks I continued in this great distress, keeping all things to myself, being ashamed to open my estate to any. At last being in the company of some grace, I understood they concluded (although indeed it was my own mistake) that the least measure of true grace was for a man to know that he had grace, and therefore without further examination concluded I had no grace. This conclusion confirmed me in my former darkness, that all my enjoyments were but mere flashes, my sorrow was greatly increased, and the distress of my soul pressed me down exceedingly. Had not the Lord been gracious to relieve me in a little time, I must have sunk under the burden. But it pleased his Majesty to give me seasonable relief; having an opportunity about a week after to hear Mr. Moline, who preached at the church by London-stone. Being a preparation sermon, he laid down as a truth at the beginning, that to prepare a man for the right receiving the sacrament, it was absolutely necessary he should have grace; but the least measure of grace was sufficient. He then fell on the question, What the least measure of grace was? Before he gave positive answers to this question, he proved that for a man to know he had grace, was not the least measure; but a very large degree of grace, being a reflect act of faith, &c. I greatly wondered within myself to hear him speak of that which did so greatly and particularly respect me. And also found some small beginnings of those signs of true grace in my soul which he laid down. This wonderfully relieved my hopes again: God being pleased to give me some strength to depend upon his grace, and to wait upon him in every duty, whatsoever his pleasure might be towards me at last. It pleased God to encourage me greatly by two scriptures which were brought to my mind with great power. *Is. 30:18. Therefore will the Lord wait that he may be gracious into you, and therefore will be exalted that he may have mercy upon you, for the Lord is a God of judgment, blessed are all they that wait for him.* Meditating on these words, it filled me with astonishment, that the great God of Heaven and Earth should reckon himself exalted to shew mercy to poor sinners, and to encourage them to wait from this consideration, that he was a God of judgment, and knew the fittest season to give what a poor soul waited for. Also *Isa. 50:10. Where he that sits in darkness and hath no light is exhorted to trust in the name of the Lord, and stay himself upon his God.*

Trusts in Christ.

_Being now 17 years of age, about the end of 1632, it pleased God to bring Mr. John Goodwin to London, whose ministry I found very profitable. Delivering his judgment about the dealings of God in the conversion of sinners, he shewed that the terrors of the law were not of necessity to be preached to prepare the soul for Christ, but rather in their nature and tendency did drive the soul for Christ, answering very many objections and scriptures brought by others to the contrary. This was great use to me, so far as to satisfy me that God had not tied himself to any such way of converting a sinner; but according to his own pleasure took several ways to bring a soul to Jesus Christ. Having for some time seen the want of Christ, as he only by whom I must except parson, and had also seen the worth and excellencies that were in him above all other objects, it cause my soul to rest upon and trust in him.

_About this time I began to be acquainted with several young men that diligently attended the means, to whom it had pleased God to make known much of himself and of grace. Being apprentices, as well as myself, we had no opportunity of converse except on the Lord_s days. It being out constant practice to attend the morning lecture which began at six o_clock, both at Cornhill and Christ-church, we appointed to meet together an hour before it to spend in prayer and in communicating what experience we had received from the Lord to each other; or else to repeat some sermon we had heard before. After a little time we also read some portion of scripture and spoke from it, what it pleased God to enable us. By degrees I arrived to some small measure of knowledge, finding the study of the scriptures very pleasant and delightful to me, which I attended to, as it pleased God to give me opportunity.

Principles of Nonconformity.

_Several ministers, as Mr. Davenport, Mr. Hooker, and others, about this time left the kingdom, because they could not conform. This put me upon examining the grounds thereof; to which end I furnished myself with all the books and manuscripts I could get. Perusing these I found, comparing what I read with the scriptures, that God was very jealous of his worship, and had left many examples of his severity when any had added any thing thereunto. As the cases of Nadab and Abihu. *Lev. 10:2.* and of Uzzah touching the ark. Being myself very weak, and finding many able ministers that did conform, I applied to those I judged most able for satisfaction. But instead of satisfying me they rather despised my youth, shewing more passion than reason: although some years after, those very men in the Synod, condemned the same things as unlawful, which they now so zealously defended.

Becomes a Dissenter

_Finding myself greatly disappointed, I was the more provoked to beg earnestly of God to direct me, and I obtained much satisfaction from searching the scriptures. I was also much helped by hearing *Mr. Glover* that went to *New England*, and *Mr. Burrow* who soon after went to *Holland*.

_Being now arrived at the age of 22 years, I united with an Independent congregation, with a resolution as soon as it pleased God to open a way, to embark for New-England. But the providence of God prevented me, and soon after it pleased God to provide for me a suitable yoke-fellow, a member of the same congregation, and one with me in judgement. (It must have been about this time that Mr. Kiffin was convinced of baptism and united with Mr. Spilsbury's church.)

This being in the heat of the Bishop's severities [1638] we were forced to meet very early in the morning, and continue together till night. Amongst them, at their desire, I improved those small abilities God was pleased to give me; and although our meeting was disturbed, I was kept out of the hands of persecutors.

_But coming out from a meeting, at a house on Tower-hill, on a Lord's day, several rude persons were about the door. Many stones were thrown at me, one of which fell on my eye, but did me no great hurt, so that I escaped out of their hands.

_About a year after, I was sent for by a poor man, a smith, who lived in Nightingale Lane, and who was very sick. When I came to him he was wasted almost to skin and bone. He asked me if I knew him; to which I replied, I did not. He answered, he knew me, saying, that he was the man who disturbed our meeting at Tower-hill, and who had gathered the people together to stone me. He said that at the time he was a strong a man as most, but on going home from the place he fell ill and had wasted in his body to what I now saw him. He desired me to pray for him, which I accordingly did; but that day he died. Thinking this a remarkable providence I think it not amiss to record it.

Remarkable Deliverance

_Not long after the Parliament began to sit. Being at a meeting in Southwark, before the differences arose between the King and them, I was taken and carried before some Justices of the Peace. The Assizes being held the next day, Judge Mallet committed me to the White-Lion prison. Here I remained a prisoner some time while the Judge went the circuit into Kent. While here, the prisoners in the common goal were incensed against me, by one of them whose chambers were under mine, who intended to do me mischief, and as they afterwards told me, to take away my life. Several of these had been condemned but were reprieved, and others were brought into prison for great robberies. Accordingly on a Lord's day evening, several of them came up to my chamber, my door being open, and myself, wife, maid-servant, and child in the room. One Jackson, a noted rogue, with a great truncheon in his hand, came before them, and asked me who I had in the room: I replied, None but what you see. Having upon the table some spanish tobacco which a friend had left me, I asked him if he would accept it: some of his company took it and thanked me. I also asked them if they would drink, which they did. Jackson turning to them, bid them go out of the room, and bidding me farewell, went away. The man's chamber who had set them on, being under mine, they endeavoured to break the door open. On hearing this, I went down and asked what they meant to do. Jackson replied, that the person in that room [had told] them to knock me on the head,

and now they [would] work for him though they should be hanged for it the next day. Through much entreaty they at last desisted._

Engages in Trade

Mr. Kiffin was in a remarkable way soon after delivered from prison. The gracious interference in his favour he recorded with devout gratitude.

Our readers have been informed Vol I p 338, that Mr. Kiffin was a person of very considerable property. Lest any should suppose this was improperly obtained at a period when many persons rose in wealth through the confusion of the times. He has very ingenuously left an account of the way in which the Lord was pleased to bless his honest industry. As follows,

_In the year 1643. I went into Holland with some small commodity which I found good profit by; but coming home again I was greatly pressed by the people with whom I was a member to continue with them. This I complied with, and omitted that opportunity of proceeding with that trade, and spent my time chiefly in studying the word of God; until I had spent most of what I had obtained, my wife also employing herself diligently to get what we could that we might eat our own bread, and not be burdensome to any. About the end of the year 1645, seeing no way of subsistence, and that I was likely to be reduced to a very low condition in the world; I spoke to a young man, a member, who I observed walked very soberly, about his going over to Holland. He had but little of the world, but was willing to go and take with him such commodity that I first took, and which I had found so profitable.

Is Very Prosperous

Though our united stocks were very little, yet it pleased God to bless our endeavour to increase it from scores to hundreds and thousands of pounds, giving me more of this world than ever I expected to enjoy! By these means I was enabled to improve the small talent God had given me without being burdensome to any, and also to give without receiving, which I bless the Lord he hath in some measure given me an heart to do. And while others under the *present* sad differences raised their estates by public places and public lands, I stood in no need of public places of profit, and always was wary of meddling with any public lands; which by the good providence of God proved very advantageous to me, as will hereafter be related more particularly. One thing I mention to take off some aspersions that have been cast upon me, which was, that I raised my estate by obtaining orders to bring in prohibited goods, which other men could not do, through the favour of the *Long Parliament*, and the *Protector*. This was a scandal cast on me, as I never received any but such as was common to all other men, be they what they would._

Mr. Kiffin after enumerating several circumstances to prove what he had asserted on this subject, adds, _I the rather give some account of this to satisfy all hereafter that what estate God hath blest me with, hath been by his hand in my lawful employment._

He proceeds by saying, _Passing by many things, I shall now give some account of several providences which have attended me for good since his Majesty_s return.I considered at this time that I had many enemies, and could not but expect hard treatment from men that envied my estate.But that *God* who hath given me occasion to trust in him ever since I lay upon my mother_s breast, and had carried me along through many changes of my life, hath wonderfully wrought for me and preserved me by his grace to this moment.

Committed to Prison

_I mention one thing which took place a little before the King_s return.General Monk, coming to London, took up his quarters near my house.In a few days after, myself and several others were seized by soldiers at midnight, and carried to the guard at Paul_s.The next day it was rumoured in the city that a great quantity of arms were taken there.As we were citizens, we thought it convenient to write a letter to my Lord Mayor, Sir Thomas Almin, mentioning the scandal that was cast upon us; having had no arms in our houses, but such as were common to housekeepers, and praying that matters might be examined, that we might not be detained from our calling, and kept prisoners without cause. My Lord Mayor was pleased to order the letter to be read at the Common Council, who being satisfied with our innocency, sent some officers of their own to the General, that we might be released, and our arms restored which were taken from us; which was accordingly done.

_For some time after his Majesty_s return I remained in quiet.But about six months after, it pleased God to take away by death the Princess of Orange, when a plot was laid to deprive me both of life and estate.A letter was forged as if coming from Taunton to me, to this effect, viz, That the Princess of Orange being now dead, they were ready to put their design into execution; if according to my promise I would provide and send down *Powder, Match, Bullet, &c.* for that they believed the promise that *one of them should chase a thousand!*

His Examination

_In consequence of this letter I was seized at midnight upon a Saturday, and carried to the guard at Whitehall, none being suffered to speak with me; where I continued all the Lord_s day under many taunts and threats of the soldiers.In the evening I was brought before General Monk and several others of the Council, who read the above said letter to me and charging me with being guilty of the things alleged against me.

_To which I replied, that I knew not the name of the person by whom it was said the letter was written, and did abhor so much as entertaining any thought of doing any thing that would disturb the kingdom.

_Under this dispensation I found many supports from God, and knowing my own innocence did not doubt but the Lord would one way or other, work for my deliverance.

_After examination I was again committed to the charge of the soldiers, with a charge they should take care of me, and take me the next day to the Lord Chief Justice Foster. I was then taken to an Inn in King Street, where I was strictly watched all the night.

_The next day I was taken in a coach to Sargeant_s Inn to be examined. Soldiers surrounding the coach occasioned a great concourse of people, enquiring what was the matter, some crying out, *Traytors, Roques, hang them all!*

_Coming to my Lord Chief Justice I was strictly examined by him about the said letter. After answering the questions proposed, I told his Lordship that I had no doubt but his Lordship took more pleasure to clear an innocent man, than to condemn one who was guilty, and therefore prayed him that I might have liberty to speak for myself, not doubting but my innocency would appear: to which his Lordship replied, I should speak freely what I could.

Honourably Acquitted

_I told him there were some things in the letter itself which would make it appear that it was a forged letter. First, the letter takes the rise of the execution of this plot from the death of the Princess of Orange, and yet it was dated at Taunton three days before she died! His Lordship said it was a considerable observation, and looking upon the date of the letter, said that it might be but a mistake in the date, and yet the letter be true. To which I answered, I should leave that to his Honour_s consideration, but there was one thing more which, with submission to his Lordship_s judgement, could be no mistake. This was, that there could be no letter written from London to Taunton, and an answer received from Taunton from the time of the death of the Princess of Orange, by the time I was seized.. His Lordship knew the Princess died on the Monday night, and no letter could give advice of it by post till the next night, and no answer could be received to that letter till the next Monday morning, and I was seized on the Saturday night, which must needs be before any post come in! Upon which his Lordship looking very stedfastly upon the Lieutenant Colonel, whose prisoner I was, the Lieut. Colonel desired my Lord to give me the oaths; to whom he replied in great anger he would not; and that things were come to a fine pass when a Lord Chief Justice must be taught what to do by a Soldier; adding, it was a Trepan. Then, directing his speech to me, said, he was satisfied I was abused, and that if I could find out the author of the said letter he would punish him, and then discharged me.

_There were Mr. Henry Jessy, and Mr. Crape mentioned also in the said letter, who were both examined and acquitted. Thus did God work for my deliverance, and ensnare those who contrived this letter in the work of their hands. We escaped as a bird out of the snare of the Fowler, having great cause to bless his holy name.

Fresh Dangers

_A little after this being at a meeting on the Lord_s day in Shoreditch, I and several others were apprehended and carried before Sir Thomas Bide, and by him we

were committed to the New Prison, where we were kept about four days and were then by him released._

Mr. Kiffin was for a considerable time after this suffered to remain in quiet. He was however called again into a scene of danger, by managing an affair of a mercantile nature for the Wollen Manufactures in the West of England, who desired their members to apply to Mr. Kiffin for information. The Hamburgh company had obtained a proclamation from the King, that none but the company should trade to any parts of Holland and Germany with Woolen Manufactures. Mr. Kiffin frequently attended the house of Commons on this business, and in a Committee of the whole house, at the request of the Speaker, delivered his sentiments on the injurious tendency of this monopoly. The result was that a deputation of the members was sent to his Majesty beseeching him to call in his Proclamation. But before the king would consent he ordered that the matter might be heard before him in Council. Mr. Kiffin was ordered to attend, and his Enemies, who were of the company, and men of great interest, gloried that they should have him in the Gate-house before night! _But (says he) though man thought evil God brought it about for good, for being charged when before the king with speaking against his Majesty's Prerogative, I replied that I knew not that I had said any thing against his Majesty's Prerogative, nor was I come thither for that purpose, but being commanded by the House of Commons to offer my reasons why the continuing the Trade would be prejudicial to the kingdom, I had done so, and if his Majesty pleased I was ready to offer them before himself: else I had nothing to say in that matter.

Much Esteemed by the King

It pleased God so to order it that several members of the House of Commons were present, who declared against confining the Trade. His Majesty was pleased to defer the further hearing of it to the next Council, and commanded me to be present. At that Council several of the Company laid many charges, and cast great reflections upon me of what I had said in former times. To whom I replied, that in all the late times I had only concerned myself in my own callings, having not advanced my estate either by public places, and what I had offered to his Majesty, and his Most Honourable Council, was in obedience to His Majesty's commands, and being what I thought for the good and advantage of the kingdom; but if his Majesty thought otherwise I desired humbly to submit to his Majesty's great wisdom therein. It pleased God so to order it, that his Majesty and Council were so far satisfied as to recall his Proclamation, and this circumstance by which my enemies thought to obtain such advantage over me, proved greatly to my good, occasioning his Majesty and the Council to have a good opinion of me. My *Lord Arlington* hath told me, that though in every list of disaffected persons fit to be secured, I always was in as one; yet the King would never hear any thing against me, my Lord Chancellor also, the Earl of Clarendon, being very much my friend. (The above statement accounts fully for the influence Mr. Kiffin had with the Lord Chancellor, and the services which by these means he did for the oppressed Baptists mentioned Vol I pp. 386, 337, 385.)

Charged with Treason

About a year after this I met with another great trial, wherein nothing less than my life was aimed at. About midnight I was seized by Mr. Wickam, one of the messengers of the Council, by order of the Duke of Buckingham, and was by him delivered to Mr. Clifford, a gentleman belonging to the Duke: many others were seized at that time also. Being carried to York house I remained under a guard of Soldiers till the next night; when the Duke of Buckingham and several others came there, and I was called before them. The Duke charged me with having hired two men to kill the king, and with saying, that if they would not do it, that I would do it myself; but added if I would confess the truth, he would take care that I should not suffer. I was greatly amazed at this charge, and returned for answer, I had rather he should charge me with it than I should entertain it, as much as in my thoughts; for I thanked God that I did abhor it from my soul towards the meanest man in the kingdom; much more towards his Majesty; - and further told him, that he could not be considered his Majesty's friend, who should speak a word of saving the life of any man that was in his wits who should intend any such thing! The Duke replied, he knew I could speak well enough for myself, having spoken so often before the Council; but what he had charged me with could be proved by two witnesses, and ordered Clifford to deliver me to the Soldiers while the others were examined, (whose crimes it seemed were not so high as mine). I felt some consternation though I knew my own innocence. It pleased the Lord whose care and goodness had been extended towards me in all difficulties to that day, greatly to revive me, by bringing that scripture with great power upon my soul, Isa 41:10

- Fear thou not; for I *am* with thee: be not dismayed; for I *am* thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness. _I was so quieted in my heart, that my fears vanished, and was made willing to wait upon whatever the pleasure of God should be towards me in this matter. About two hours after, when all were examined, and several sent to the Gate house, Mr. Wickam having requested the Duke that I might be his prisoner, it was ordered accordingly, and I went to bed at his house and slept quietly.

Set at Liberty

The next day my Lady Ranelagh came to visit me, to whom I related the charges made against me by the Duke. She advised me to write a letter to my Lord Chancellor to acquaint him with my condition; and said she would carry it to my Lord. I did so, and that Lady delivered it into his Lordship's hands. Having read it, he told her that there was nothing of these things before them in Council, and promised that the next Council day he would acquaint the King and Council. Upon which the Secretaries of State were asked if they had received any charge against me. On their answering there was none, I was ordered to be discharged without paying of fees. The Messenger, at whose house I was, being present at the Council to hear the issue, being more my friend than I could have expected, brought me word of the said order, which he had received, and discharged me the same night. I now thought the storm was over, and that I was delivered out of the hands of unreasonable men. Having understood the kindness of my Lord Chancellor, I went the next morning to his house to acknowledge my thankfulness to him.

Remanded to Prison

While I staid without, there went in to him, the Lord Chief Justice *Bridgman*, Sir *Geoffery Palmer*, his Majesty's Attorney General, Sir *Henry Finch*, Solicitor General, and Sir *Richard Brown*. After a little while I was called in, they being all present. My Lord asked me how I came to be there, and whether I was not a prisoner? I told his Lordship I had been a prisoner, and was come to return his Lordship thanks for his favour in presenting my case to his Majesty, by means of which I had been released. He asked me how I came to be released? I answered by the order of the King and Council. He demanded where that order was? I told him the original was in the Messenger's hand, but I had a copy of it; which I shewed him. He said, there had been indeed such an order passed, but that afterward the Duke of Buckingham came and brought in his charge, and then it was ordered that I should be continued in the Messenger's hands, and therefore I must return and surrender myself a prisoner again. I thanked his Lordship, and told him I was very willing to do so, knowing my innocence. He then wished me to go to the Back stairs at Whitehall, and desire one of the King's pages, who attended there to acquaint the king I was there, and said if I could satisfy the King to take bail it was well. I accordingly went not knowing what the issue of this thing might be. His Majesty being gone out, I returned to the city, and took two sufficient citizens with me to tender as Bail, if it was demanded, and hastened back again. As the providence of God ordered it, just as the King came in the Chancellor went in to the King. At the door I was remanded back again, and having staid about an hour without, a Messenger came and told me the King commanded him to let me know I might go home.

Set at Liberty

He asked me if I had any Messenger with me; on my telling him I had none, he said, if I had he had orders that he should charge me; but that I must be ready at all times to come when his Majesty sent for me: which I promised I would. Thus did the Lord by his own hand work for my full deliverance was matter of wonder to all that heard of it; for many that were seized at the same time, whose charges were not so high as mine, were kept in the Gate-house upwards of six months, although nothing was brought against them the time of their commitment till their release.

After this I was sent for by Sir Richard Brown. I went immediately, and he demanded to know where I had been that summer? I told him at London chiefly; but as my family was at a kinsman's house in Hartforshire, I was sometimes there myself. He then demanded if I had not engaged those people with whom I walked to enter into a Covenant against the government? I told him the end of our meeting was only to edify each other as we were able in matters of religion, and not to meddle with any thing which was prejudicial to the government. He told me there was one present that would witness it. I replied, I know there was no such thing. He then said he would further examine the witnesses, and seeing I came voluntarily on his sending for me, I might go home till I heard further from him: but I heard nothing of that matter afterwards.

Events After the Revolution

_About this time also, at six o'clock in the evening, a guard being kept at the Exchange, a party of soldiers came to my house, searching all my papers, and perusing them found nothing. But looking under my man_s desk they saw a book which they supposed was hid there, (and indeed so it was by my man without my knowledge) this they eagerly snatched up, crying, now they had found something indeed but when they looked into it, they found it was a book of *Reynard the Fox*, which it seems my man used to read. When they saw their error they laid it down again, and took me to the guard at the Exchange. Sir Thomas Player having the chief command there, asked me several questions, which I answered. He told me he had a special order to secure me; but if I would pass my word to be forth-coming whenever I was sent for, he would let me go home. This I promised to do, and returned home in about an hour. From that period to the present I have never heard any thing laid to my charge, but through the Lord_s goodness I have been in my habitation enjoying the comfort of my relations, and what it hath pleased God to give me of the things of this world._

The manuscript thus far appears to have been written before the year 1669. After the glorious Revolution Mr. Kiffin resumed it, and added many important particulars. They are as follows.

_It pleased God to take to himself my eldest son, which was no small affliction to me and my dear wife. The sense thereof did greatly press me down with more than ordinary sorrow, being a young man of about 20 years of age, whose obedience to his parents, and forwardness in the ways of God were such as made him very amiable in the eyes of all who knew him. In the midst of my great distress it pleased the Lord to support me, from that blessed word brought to my mind, *Matt xx. 15 Is it not lawful for me to do what I will with mine own? Is thine eye evil, because I am good?* Which words did quiet my heart with a free submission to his will, being satisfied it was for his great advantage, and a voice to me to be more watchful over my own ways!

Death of His Sons

My other eldest son then living being but weakly and desiring to travel, I sent him with the Captain of a Ship, a person of my acquaintance, who went for Aleppo: and fearing that in his voyage and travels he might be in danger of being corrupted in his judgement by those of the Popish Religion, I sent a young minister with him to prevent any thing of that kind. But I was greatly prevented, for the minister left him and the Ship at Leghorne, and traveled himself to Rome; by which means I was to my sorrow disappointed. On my son_s returning home, he was poisoned by a Popish Priest at Venice; being too forward in discoursing with him about religion, the Priest to shew his revenge sent him out of the world. I forbear mentioning the minister_s name, being yet alive: I desire the Lord may not lay this sin to his charge!

_Soon afterwards it pleased the Lord to permit the laws to be put in execution with severity against Dissenters. Being taken at a meeting I was prosecuted for 40 pounds,

which I deposited in the hands of the officer. Finding some errors in the proceedings, I brought it to trial and overthrew the Informers, although it cost me 30 pounds to recover my 40 pounds again. But it had this advantage, that many poor men that were prosecuted on the same account were hereby relieved, the Informers fearing to proceed against them.

Death of Wife

_It pleased the Lord soon after to take to himself my dear and faithful wife with whom I had lived nearly 44 years. Her tenderness to me, and faithfulness to God were such as cannot by me be expressed. She sympathized with me under all my afflictions, and I can truly say, I never heard her utter the least discontent, under all the providence which attended myself or her. Eyeing the hand of God in them she was a constant encourager of me in the ways of God; her death was the greatest sorrow to me I ever met with in the world. She departed this life the 5th of October 1682.

_Presently after her death I was again prosecuted by informers for 15 meetings which amounted to 300 pounds! They managed this so secretly that they had got the record in court for the money. There being errors discovered in the record, they moved the Court (Judge Jenner sitting Judge) to amend it. But some of my friends being present moved that I might be heard before the order was made. Coming to the knowledge of this, I employed able Counsel, and after several hearings the Informers let the matter fall; by which means I was delivered out of their hands, and have been preserved from their violence ever since.

_But the wise providence of God which orders all things as he pleaseth, reserved yet farther trials to attend me in my old age; although through his goodness he hath been pleased to bear me up under them all, and in the sharpest of which I have seen goodness and mercy towards me.

_Soon after the discovery of the Popish Plot, came on the pretended plot of the Duke of Monmouth and the Lord Russell, at which time my house was searched and my arms taken from me; which were no other than such as were necessary for my house. Great enquiries were made from some of the witnesses against my Lord Russell whether I had not an hand in it? But none were found to witness any thing against me, neither indeed could any justly do it, as I was a stranger to both the Duke and Lord Russell; not so much as knowing them by face, nor ever being at any time in their company.

Difficulties in his Family

Several persons at this time fled to Holland, amongst whom was Sir Thomas Armstrong, and at the request of some of his friends, there was a bill of Exchequer remitted to him, which it was pretended was sent by my son in law Mr. Joseph Hayes, who was apprehended for it, and tried for his life; but God by a merciful providence delivered him, While I was endeavouring to help him all I could, returning to my house about nine o'clock at night I found a packet of letters which were left for me with my servants, about half an hour before, but who brought them they could not tell. When I

opened them I found one directed to my Lord Chief Justice Jefferies, and another to myself. That to myself was full of treasonable words and threats, which I immediately sent to my Lord Chief Justice by a servant; as I plainly saw it was a trap to me; but the Chief Justice not being at home, they were delivered to one of his Clerks, who reading the letter that was sent me, said he would deliver them to his Master. He further told my servant he thought he knew the hand, which was a further confirmation they were sent with a design. I never heard any thing more of the letters, but the storm though it blew over, proved the ruin of my son in law and his wife in a great measure. _ (Burnet in the history of his own times has preserved a good account of this trial. Vol I p 599. Mr. Hayes was a Banker and pleaded his own cause with great spirit and success to the confusion of the Court.)

After this the tragical events took place related Vol I p 434-454 respecting Mr. Kiffin's grandsons, and also the honours which he reluctantly accepted in being appointed by the King an Alderman of the City of London. See Vol I p 474.

Charge to his Descendants

His design in writing the Account of his life is thus piously and pathetically expressed in an address to his children, his grand children, and great grand children, _ You may hereby see it is not in vain to follow God in the way of duty, nor to enquire betimes after the knowledge of Jesus Christ, for they that find him find life, and obtain favour from the Lord; and that whoso walks in the way of God shall dwell safely and be quiet from the fear of evil. This, to the praise of God, I can say I have experienced; and I would not for ten thousand worlds, if I know my heart, but have tasted the gracious dealings of God in my younger days. Being sensible of the decays of nature, and the great inability that attends me thereby to do service to Jesus Christ; therefore the counsel I would leave with you is, first, Have a care of your own hearts that they be not taken with the vanities of the present world. Your temptations may be more than mine were in my younger days, in regard your enjoyment of it is much more. But yet consider it as an evil requital to his mercies shewed to your Father, that what God hath given him, and left by him to you, . Should be used to sin against that God who hath freely given it. Oh let not that which your Father hath received as mercy from God, be so used that at last it may prove a curse to you. I have often prayed that you may have another portion than a portion in this life, that Jesus Christ may be your portion, and that your younger years may be spent in looking after the *one thing needful*. I well know outward mercies prove great snares to keep many from Christ, and they call for great watchfulness over our hearts in the enjoyment of them. We are very apt to follow example, and are therefore charged not to follow a multitude to do evil. Our Lord Christ tells us that broad is the way which leads to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat. _

His Labours

From the following paragraph it appears that Mr. Kiffin intended to write another account of his life relating to the church of which he was pastor: this we much fear is now lost. _ And from several trials (says he) which have attended me from those with whom I

have walked for more than 50 years! I intend to set them down by themselves, they being things which more particularly relate to the congregation._

It is not necessary to say much respecting the character of Mr. Kiffin. He has artlessly delineated the features of an honest man, _fearing God and hating covetousness._ The remark of Crosby is confirmed by the whole of his history. _He was a man of great natural parts, and some learning; a great disputant, and when joined with others generally had the preference._ Having embraced the sentiments of the Baptists from the debates which took place on the subject in Mr. Jessey's congregation, he honestly avowed them, and constantly defended them. He was one of the Disputants with the famous Dr. Featly in 1642, about four years after he joined the Baptists. He was also engaged in a great dispute on this subject at Coventry. Dr. Grew and Dr. Bryan, were on the side of the Paedobaptists; and Mr. Kiffin and Mr. Knollis on that of the Baptists. The debate was managed with good temper, and great moderation; both sides claimed the victory, and parted good friends.

Being independent in his circumstances, and very zealous in the cause of his Master, he traveled far from London, in company with Mr. Patient, preaching and teaching Jesus Christ. This exposed him to the malignant envy of the abusive Edwards, who reviles him and his people by the most scurrilous epithets. This shameful treatment Mr. Kiffin bore with christian meekness, reproving his accuser by the following letter in 1646, which Edwards, without any apparent reason, has published. It certainly exposed the unchristian spirit of the Author of Gangraena..

Much Opposed

To Mr. Edwards.

_Sir,

You stand as one professing yourself to be instructed by Christ with abilities from God to throw down error; and therefore to that end do preach every third day: may it therefore please you, and those that employ you in that work, to give them leave whom you so brand, as publicly to object to what you say, when your sermon is ended, as you declare your self; and we hope it will be an increase of further light to all that fear God, and put a large advantage into your hands if you have truth on your side, to cause it to shine with more evidence, and I hope we shall do it with moderation as becometh christians. Yours,

WILLIAM KIFFIN.

Another opposer, Mr. Josiah Ricraft, who calls himself _a well wisher to truth,_ published a small piece in 1645, entitled, _A Looking Glass for the Anabaptists, and the rest of the Separatists; wherein they may clearly behold a brief confutation of a certain unlicensed scandalous pamphlet, entitled, *The Remonstrance of the Anabaptists, by way of vindication of their separation.* The Impertinencies, Incongruities, Non-consequences, Falsities, and Obstinacy of *William Kiffin*, the Author, and grand Ringleader of that

seduced Sect, is discovered and laid open to the view of every indifferent-eyed Reader that will not shut his eyes against the Truth. With certain queries, vindicated from Anabaptistical glosses, together with others propounded for the Information and Conviction, (if possible) of the said *William Kiffin*, and his Proselytes._

Religious Sentiments

The consistency and general excellence of Mr. Kiffin's character, connected with his large property, gave him great influence even in the dissipated court of Charles 11. Some remarkable instances of this are mentioned with respect in Thurloe's State Papers and in Whitlock's Memorials. He seems on Political Subjects to have steered clear of the rocks on which the religious Republicans, as well as the *Jure Fivino* Episcopalians and Presbyterians split. Considering his duty to be in subjection to the constituted authorities, he gave honour to whom honour was due, and resisted not *the ordinance* as many did to their own destruction; nor did he tamely surrender his constitutional rights. His life is a full proof that the man who exercises uprightness and integrity will find it preserve him.

His religious sentiments were founded on the perfection of the Scriptures, being sufficient for all the purposes of doctrine and discipline. He therefore sought not the support either of the *Assembly* of Divines, the *Tiriers*, or the *Parliament*. Having liberty to serve God without molestation was all that escaped the mortification which many of the Independents and Baptists experienced at the Restoration of the King, and at the re-establishment of Episcopacy. He survived all the storms of this period, and lived several years after the glorious Revolution, and at length in peace and tranquillity died in a good old age, full of days, riches, and honours. (A noble instance of Mr. Kiffin's generosity is recorded by Noble in his *Memoirs of Cromwell*, Vol II p 464. _He received under his protection a family of considerable rank, fitted up and furnished a house for their reception, provided them with servants and entirely maintained them at his own expense. Afterwards when this ruined family recovered some part of their ruined fortune, he would not diminish it a single shilling by taking any retribution for the services he had rendered them._

Inscription on his Tomb

He was buried in Bunhill-Fields. Upon his tomb-stone was the following inscription, preserved By Mr. *Strype* in his Edition of Stow's Survey of London.

WILLIAM KIFFIN

Eldest Son of William Kiffin of London, Merchant,

(and an Anabaptist Preacher)

[There is no doubt but this line was inserted by Strype.]

Died in the Lord, August 31st, 1669,

In the 21st year of his age.

Also,

PRISCILLALIDDEL,

Wife of Robert Liddel

And daughter of William Kiffin,

Who fell asleep in the Lord, March 15, 1670 [?1679]

And

HANNA, late Wife of William Kiffin,

And Mother to the above named William and Priscilla,

Who fell asleep in the Lord, the 6th of October, 1682.

In the 67th year of her age.

And

HARRY KIFFIN,

Son of the above said William Kiffin,

Dec. 8, 1698, aged 44.

Also

HENRIETTA late wife of John Catcher,

August 15, 1698, aged 22.

And

WILLIAM KIFFIN, the Elder,

Of London, Merchant,

Husband to the above Hanna,

And Father to the above said William, Harry, and Priscilla.

Dec. 29, 1701.

In the 86th year of his age..

Mr. Thomas Patient

Crosby says, he had met with one piece of his entitled, *A Sober discourse* of right to church communion; wherein he endeavours to prove, by scripture, by the examples of the primitive times, and the practice of all who have professed christianity, that no *unbaptized* person can be consistently admitted to the Lord's supper. This was written against the celebrated John Bunyan. He also wrote a preface to Mr. How's *Sufficiency of the Spirit's teaching*; and another to *a life of Mr. Hansard Knolly's*, with whom he was remarkably intimate.

Mr. Kiffin had for an assistant Mr. Thomas Patient. He was for some time an Independent minister in America, where he embraced the principles of the Baptists. The consequence of this was, that he was violently persecuted and opposed by the Independents, who as little understood the principles of religious liberty, as those by whose opposition they had been obliged not long before to leave England. Returning to England, about 1640, he became the colleague of Mr. Kiffin, and signed the Confession of Faith, of the seven churches; and traveled with him throughout the country, Crosby says, he went with General Fleetwood into Ireland. This we suppose was in consequence of an order of Parliament, March 12, 1649, viz. *to send over six able ministers to preach in Dublin, and to have £200 per annum a piece out of Bishops, and Deans, and Chapters lands in Ireland.*

Goes to Ireland

And in the mean time, the Lord Lieutenant to take care that it be paid out of the public Revenue, and if any of those ministers die of that service in Ireland, that the Parliament will make competent provision for their wives and children. Dr. Winter being removed, Mr. Patient generally preached in the Cathedral in Dublin. In this station he appears to have been associated with Mr. Christopher Blackwood; but was frequently employed in itinerating up and down the country. He signed the letters sent from Ireland to the churches in England and Wales as the minister of a church in Dublin in 1653. It is said he had great success in that *land of superstition*, and that many were baptized by him.

Crosby supposes he was an instrument of raising the church at Cloughkeating, which in 1740 was a church of between two and three hundred members, and in which general and particular baptists were united without distinction. (As we have so little information respecting our churches in Ireland, we preserve the following account from Crosby. This Church, which my *manuscript* says, was founded by one of old Oliver's officers, is remarkable for the persecution that attended it, in the time of *Monmouth's* rebellion. The minister and all the members were tried for their lives, and the foreman of

the Jury swore, before he went into court, that he would never come out till he had brought them all in guilty. But by God's good providence, he died as soon as he came into court, and a *protestant* Judge being on the bench the rest of the Jury acquitted them all. In Dublin he was the Chaplain of Colonel John Jones, who married the sister of Oliver Cromwell, and was one of the lords of the other house.

Settled in London

Mr. Patient was such a favourite with his officer, that he appointed him to preach before him and the council in Christ-church, Dublin, every Sunday. The change which took place in Ireland at the Restoration, led Mr. Patient and his brethren to return to England. Some time after his return he was settled at the Pithay-meeting, Bristol, with Mr. Henry Hynam, and Mr. Andrew Gifford. But leaving this he came to London, where he was chosen to the office of joint-elder with Mr. Kiffin, and was set apart in Devonshire Square, June 28, 1666, Mr. Harrison and Mr. Knollys, assisting upon the occasion. In this office, however, he was not suffered to continue long by reason of death, as appears by the following memorandum in the church books of the Society. July 30, 1666, Thomas Patient, was on the 29th instant discharged by death, from his work and office, he being then taken from the evil to come; and having rested from all his labours, leaving a blessed savour behind him of his great usefulness and sober conversation. This his sudden removal being looked upon to be his own great advantage, but the church's sore loss. On this day he was carried to his grave, accompanied by the members of this and other congregations, in a christian, comely and decent manner. Mr. Patient published nothing except a piece in Quarto on the subject of baptism.

Succeeded by Mr. Dyke.

Daniel Dyke. M.A. He was born about the year 1617, at Epping, in Essex, where his father, Mr. Jeremiah Dyke, a good old Puritan, was the parochial minister. The famous Mr. Daniel Dyke, B.D. author of an excellent treatise on the *Deceitfulness of the Human Heart*, was the brother of his father. Being designed for the public ministry he was educated first at private schools, and then at the university of Cambridge. Here he proceeded Master of Arts, and on his leaving the University received Episcopal ordination. When he appeared in public he was soon taken notice of, for his great learning and useful preaching, and was preferred accordingly to the valuable living of Hadham in *Magna*, Hertfordshire. Being dissatisfied with the terms of Conformity, and having embraced the sentiments of the Baptists, he voluntarily left his living about 1640, though it was worth at least £300 per annum. From the friendship of Oliver Cromwell he was made one of his chaplains in ordinary when he became Lord Protector. In 1653 he was made one of the *Triers* for the approval and admission of ministers; an office for which his leaning, judgement, and piety rendered him well qualified. While in this situation his name appears with those of many others to a Proclamation of the Lord Protector's ordering a collection to be made in all the Parish Churches throughout the kingdom for the relief of the poor persecuted christians in the Vallies of Piedmont. On which occasion Cromwell gave £2000! Upon the Restoration he refused to conform to the Episcopal government, and to the ceremonies of the church of England. We know not what living he had prior to this period; but he resigned it on the return of the king, foreseeing the

approaching storm. When his intimate friend, Mr. Case, who was one of the ministers deputed to wait on the king at the *Hague*, and one of the commissioners at the *Savoy*, endeavoured to persuade him to continue, and told him what a hopeful prospect they had from the king's behaviour, who repeatedly had taken the solemn league and covenant; Mr. Dyke told him plainly, _That they did but deceive and flatter themselves: that if the king was sincere in his shew of piety, and great respect for them and their religion, yet when he came to be settled, the party that had formerly adhered to him, and the creatures, that would come over with him, would have the management of the public affairs, would circumvent them in all their designs; and in all probability not only turn them out, but take away their liberty too._ Subsequently events fully justified the wisdom and justice of these observations.

Death of Mr. Dyke.

After he resigned his living he preached as often as he had opportunity. After the death of Mr. Patient he was chosen to the office of joint-elder with Mr. Kiffin, after preaching a year on probation, February 17, 1668. Mr. Knollys, Mr. Harrison, and Mr. Kiffin officiated upon this occasion. His name appears to the decision respecting the Quaker's Controversy in 1674. Also to the appeals of Mr. Obed Wills respecting Mr. Danvers. And to the letter sent to Mr. Andrew Gifford, which was probably written by him, as he was very intimate with him, and was one of the ministers who engaged in his ordination, 3rd of August 1677. He continued a faithful labourer at Devonshire Square till his death in 1688, when about 70 years of age. His remains were interred in Bunhill-Fields, and his funeral sermon preached by Mr. Warner. Though Mr. Dyke lived during three great storms, and had several writs out against him yet through some kind appearance of providence he was generally preserved from the fury of his persecutors, and was never imprisoned more than one night.

He is supposed to have been the Author of _The Quakers's Appeal answered; or a full Relation of the Occasion, Progress, and Issue of a Meeting at Barbican, between the Baptists and Quakers, 1674_ He wrote _A Recommendatory Epistle before Mr. Cox's Confutation of the Errors of Thomas Collier._ He also edited a volume of Sermons by his father.

Church in Crutched Friars.

He was succeeded by Mr. Richard Adams of whom an account has been given among the ministers in Leicestershire. He was ordained to that office in October 1690, and the service was conducted by Mr. Knollys, Mr. William Collins, Mr. Hercules Collings, &c. It has been said that till several years after his ordination singing the praises of God was unknown in the congregation; and that till December 1701, this delightful part of christian worship was not introduced, and that for some time after this it was used with extreme caution. This hardly agrees with the account of the opening the new meeting-house Vol 1 p 471, of our work, as the MS expressly says, _and psalms were sung there._ It was doubtless introduced with great difficulty into all our churches; we shall speak more on this subject in another place. Mr. Adams finished his course in 1716, but had been through extreme old age disabled from preaching several years before his

death. The church in Devonshire Square still exists, and is at present under the care of the Rev. Timothy Thomas. An account of its pastors during the intermediate period must be reserved for a future Volume of our work.

Anointing with Oil

The next church we mention is that which was founded at Crutched friars in 1639, mentioned Vol 1 p 139. The chief promoters of this congregation are said to have been _Mr. Green, Mr. Paul Hobson, and Captain Spencer._ It was doubtless to this church the writer of the pamphlet referred, entitled, _The Brownist_s Synagogue,_ &c. mentioned Vol 1 p 161. Edwards, in his *Grangraena*, tells the following curious story which probably refers to the same place. _About Aldgate, in London, there was a great meeting of many sectaries, and among others Master Knowles, [Knollys] and Master Jessey, for the restoring of a blind woman to her sight, by anointing her with oil in the name of the Lord. It was conducted after this manner. The old blind woman was set in the midst of the room, and she first prayed aloud, (all the company joining with her) to this effect: That God would bless his own ordinances and institutions for the restoring her sight. After she had done praying Master Knowles prayed for some space of time to the same effect, for a blessing upon the anointing with oil: and after prayer, she was anointed with oil, the person who performed this ceremony repeating these words: The Lord Jesus give, or restore thee, thy sight._ (Edwards_s *Gangraena*, Part 111 p 19.)

For the truth of this story, Edwards says, he had the authority of a godly minister who both saw and heard it. It is probable that these excellent ministers, thought the direction given *James v. 14-16*, was not confined to those who possessed the _gifts of healing,_ as one of the extraordinary gifts of the Holy Spirit, bestowed in the Apostolic times; but that it extended to all the ministers of Christ. This receives some confirmation from what Mr. Knollys has related of the efficacy of his prayers in many cases in the city. We have soon nothing of this practice noticed by any of our ministers, excepting by Mr. Vavasor Powell, as follows. _About the year 1645, when residing at Dartford in Kent, he says, It pleased the Lord to visit me with a dangerous fever and ague, insomuch as I was in the eyes of all my friends, and in the judgement of Physicians also hopeless as to my life; yet God gave me faith to be healed by that means prescribed, *James 5*. And I sent unto some godly Preachers in London, desiring them to come unto me, and perform that duty of anointing with oil: and whilst I was waiting for, and expecting their answer, and questioning whether they would have faith and freedom to practice the same, the Lord brought that scripture to my remembrance and fixed it upon me, *Romans iii 3*. _Shall unbelief make the faith of God of none effect?_ This Mr. Powell applied to the unbelief of the Ministers, and states that his faith was so strong that he recovered without the anointing with oil. (*Life of Vavasor Powell*, p 15)

Church in Crutched Friars

Several instances are mentioned in the life of this good man of persons recovering from dangerous sickness through the faith which they had in being recovered if he prayed for them. It does not however appear that he ever used the Oil: though it is certain he

considered it a gospel ordinance from the following declaration in his Confession of faith._Visiting the sick, and for the Elders to anoint them in the name of the Lord, is a Gospel ordinance and not repealed, *James 5:14, 15.* _ (*Ibid p 41*)

Having mentioned these facts which came in our way from the story of Edwards, we proceed to give some account of the ministers of the church in Crutched friars.

Its Ministries

John Green. He is mentioned Vol I, p 158, as being taken at a Conventicle with Mr. Praise-God-Barebones, December 19, 1641. From this he appears to have been a Felt (or Hat) maker, and one of the *_New Preachers,* who was *_a mighty stickler in this new kind of talking trade which many ignorant Coxcombs called preaching.* It is highly probable that he was one of the young men with whom Mr. Kiffin first associated, for prayer and conference of a Lord's day morning, and from which meeting the particular baptist denomination seems to have taken its rise. He was very popular, and is called, in connection with Mr. Spencer, *_an arch-separatist,* and one who was *_accounted a demi-god, who was here and every where.* Edwards says of him, *_he was one of the first mechanics that presently upon the first sitting of this Parliament [the long Parliament] preached in our churches publicly, as at Aldgate and elsewhere, and was one of that company that went over with Colonel Hempstead about summer was two years at Trinidad, but is returned lately and now preaches in an Alley in Coleman Street, once on the Lord's day, and once on the week day, where there is great resort and flocking to him, that yards, rooms and house are all full, so that he causes his neighbours conventicles as Cretensis. (Mr. John Goodwin) and others to be oft times very thin, and Independents to preach to bare walls and empty seats in comparison of this great Rabbi.* _ (*Gangraena, Part III p 49*) From this statement it should seem that he went into the army, and went to Trinidad about 1643. This accounts for his name not appearing to the confession of faith. We have no further information of his labours, and know nothing of the time or place of his death. An account is given of Mr. Hobson among the ministers in Buckinghamshire. Edwards says, Mr. Spencer had been a coachman to Lord Brook.

Mr. D_Anvers

Henry D_Anvers. Of this gentleman Crosby says, that he was joint-elder of a baptized congregation, near Aldgate, after the restoration, but gives no particulars either the place, or who was his colleague. It is possible this was the church in Crutched Friars, and therefore we introduce some account of Mr. D_Anvers in this place.

He was a person of great note among the baptists, having descended from very reputable parents, and being of considerable learning, of great piety, and extensive usefulness. He appears to have been a Colonel in the Parliament army, as also governor of Strafford, and a justice of the peace, some time before the usurpation of Oliver Cromwell. We are told he was well beloved among the people, being noted for not taking any bribes. It was while he was governor of Strafford, that he embraced the principles of the baptists, and it is supposed was baptized by Mr. Henry Hagger, who was the minister

there at that period. It is said, that he was of the fifth monarchy *principles*, though he could not fall in with their *practices*. After the restoration he suffered considerably on account of nonconformity, and as he possessed a good estate of about £400 per year, he made it over to trustees that it might not be claimed by his persecutors. His principles rendering him obnoxious to government, a proclamation was issued offering one hundred pounds for his apprehension. He was at length taken, and sent prisoner to the Tower; but his lady having great interest at Court, and there being no charge of consequence against him, he was released upon bail: this was about 1675. How long he was in prison is not said, but he had published a second edition of his learned treatise on baptism the year before. In the reign of James II he attended some private meetings at which matters were concerted in favour of the Duke of Monmouth, but the scheme of that unfortunate prince failing, Mr. D_Anvers fled to Holland, where he died about 1686, a year after the Duke was beheaded.

Treatise on Baptism

In the History of Dissenting Churches lately published, Mr. Wilson says, Vol I p 398. _As Mr. D_Anvers was engaged in a controversy of some importance, both as it regards the subject, and the persons who were concerned in it, the reader will expect some account of his writings. In 1674, appeared the second edition of his *_Treatise on baptism;_ wherein that of Believers and that of Infants, is examined by the Scriptures, with the History of both out of Antiquity; making it appear that Infants_ Baptism was not practiced for near four hundred years after Christ: with the fabulous Traditions, and erroneous Grounds upon which it was, by the Pope_s Canons (with Gossips, Chrism, Exorcism, Baptizing of Bells, and other Popish Rites) founded. And that the famous Waldensian, and old British Churches, Lollards, and Wicklifians, and other Christians witnessed against it. With the History of Christianity among the Ancient Britons and Waldensians._* We have, says Mr. Wilson, given the full title to this book in order to prepare the reader for much curious matter which he may expect in the perusal. Without deciding on the merits of the argument, it is not too much to say, that in this performance Mr. D_Anvers displays great labour and ingenuity; a good knowledge of ecclesiastical history, and of the writings of the ancients; and that he takes such a comprehensive view of the subject as to deserve the attention of those who are desirous of acquainting themselves with the controversy. This treatise soon brought upon Mr. D_Anvers a number of adversaries, particularly Mr. Wills, Mr. Blioman, and Mr. Baxter. To these he replied in three distinct treatises in 1675. Mr. Wills having charged Mr. D_Anvers with misquoting his authors and perverting their sense, appealed to the Baptists upon the subject. This occasioned some of Mr. D_Anvers friends, to print a short paper in his vindication. It was signed by Hans. Knollys, William Kiffin, Daniel Dyke, Joseph Gosnold, Henry Forty, Thomas De Laune._

Vindicated by his Brethren

In this paper they say to Mr. Wills, *_Some of the particulars in your appeal we find to be so very trivial, and insignificant that they deserve not to be mentioned, and deem his answers returned to them respectively, sufficient to satisfy the reader. Others of your charges he traverses, and joins issue with you, at the bar you have brought it to; and*

the most material of these we now remark to you; - their conclusion after the most minute investigation is as follows, _ And as Mr. D_Anvers has publicly owned what of mistake he is convinced of in answer to your appeal; so it is justly expected you will also, according to your promise in the preface to your appeal, do the same in these particulars. And since your charges do not appear to be true, to the satisfaction of all impartial persons, but, on the contrary, great mistakes on your side; you will not, we hope, think it unjust, if we acquit him and reflect the blame of the charge upon yourself, as you desire, in case you be found in error._

The Treatise on Baptism by Mr. D_Anvers was well defended by Mr. Tombes, Mr. Hutchinson, and Mr. Delanne, against Mr. Will, Mr. Baxter, Mr. Whiston, and Mr. Walker; but notwithstanding his able defenses and so many learned vindications, it was common for the Paedobaptists to reiterate the charges of forgery, prevarication, &c. &c. and by none more so than by Dr. Wall in his *History of Infant Baptism*._

Mr. Stennett's Opinion

The Doctor affects to treat Mr. D_Anvers with great contempt, as unworthy of his notice, and speaks of him in the most degrading terms. To writers of this sort we shall reply by giving the sentiments of Mr. Joseph Stennett on this subject in his admirable defense of baptism, published 1704, in reply to Mr. David Russen's book, entitled, *Fundamentals without a foundation, or a true picture of the Anabaptists, &c.* _As if Mr. Russen had repented (says Mr. S.) of being just to Mr. Tombes, he returns to his violent humour, and gives to Mr. Tombes, and gives no quarter to Mr. D_Anvers whom he calls Mr. Tombes's ape, telling us his book is calculated for the Meridian of Ignorance, and that 'tis a book full of Plagiarism, Prevarications, Impertinencies, and manifold Falsehoods. That no man of learning, but one who designedly carries on a cause, will ever defile his fingers with such Pitch, and that himself should be ashamed to produce a book of that nature in matter of controversy. _If (says Mr. Stennett) Mr. Russen makes Mr. D_Anvers a Plagiary, either for using the arguments which others have used before him, or for his quotations, from various authors, himself has done the same; and if Mr. D_Anvers has not been cautious enough to avoid mistakes, Mr. R. so frequently falls into the same fault, and some others besides, that he might very well have spared this hard reflection. And since he is sure no man of learning, but one who designedly carries on a cause, will defile his fingers with Pitch; why does he think fit to defile his fingers by touching it, since he has sufficiently informed us that he is a *man of learning*, though I suppose he will hardly own himself to be a *man of learning*, though I suppose he will hardly own himself to be a man of design? For I presume by one who designedly carries on a cause, he means one who has an ill design in so doing. However this book of Mr. D_Anvers, with all its faults, has arguments in it which Mr. R. does not think fit to touch, perhaps because he finds the pitch will stick to his fingers.

Of Mr. D_Anvers's Book

But it is a very pleasant account this gentleman gives of Mr. D_Anvers sophistry, which is that he has brought the testimony of *Baxter, Calvin, Perkins, Piscator, and Parvens*, to

vindicate the principles of the Anabaptists, when those divines practiced to the contrary, and the testimonies of *Luther*, and *Bullinger*, and the *Centurians of Magdeburg* to the same purpose: this he says is no honest dealing, and the practice of an Impostor. As if it were an unheard of practice to use what they call *Argumentum ad hominem*, to cite authors against themselves, and to improve their concessions in one place, against what they advance in another. Does Mr. R. think it impossible for authors to write inconsistently, that nothing may be inferred from what they grant to lessen the force of what they assert? And that it is impertinent to cite their testimony to a matter of fact, if this fact is not altogether agreeable to the principles and practices they embrace? At this rate Mr. R. himself would have escaped many a remark since his book is not free from inconsistencies. And does he think to come off easily in bringing a charge of dishonesty and imposture against any one that shall quote him against himself, or cite passages from Paedobaptists to weaken their arguments that are brought for Infant baptism? For my part I do not think fit to raze out the Citations of this kind, which I have inserted before to please this gentleman and for fear of incurring his censure. (Stennett's Answer to Russen, p 201, 202)

Curious Title

Mr. D_Anvers was very strenuous for laying on of hands on the baptized believers, considering this as the scriptural idea of *confirmation*. In 1674 he published a treatise on this subject with its history both from scripture and ecclesiastical history. This work was replied to by Mr. Benjamin Keach, among the Particular baptists, and Mr. Thomas Grantham of the general baptists. This practice was adopted by many of the baptist churches, and is still attended to by some of the general baptists. The writer knows not of any among the particular baptists who observe the practice at present, but the late Dr. Gifford, of Eagle Street, was very strenuous for it, and continued to observe it till his death.

Mr. D_Anvers printed another work which we have never seen; but in his History of Baptism is an advertisement to this effect, _There is by the same author, a book lately printed, called, Theopolis, or City of God, in opposition to the City of Nations: being a comment upon *Rev.20:21*. In which the mystery of the two states, worlds and kingdoms, Christ_s and Antichrist_s, the two cities Jerusalem and Babylon; the two women, the bride and the whore: the two creatures Lamb and Beast, are particularly unfolded, with a more distinct account than any yet extant, of the great battle of Armageddon, and the success thereof, in the taking and destroying, and imprisoning of the dragon, Beast and False prophet; and the thousand years reign concerning the same, with the many scriptural arguments why those two prophecies of the great battle, and thousand years reign in point of time, do precede, or are to be before the personal coming of Jesus Christ, whose said personal coming and appearing, with his kingdom and reign on the earth with all his saints, is described, particularly asserted, and treated on. A piece which may be very useful to any that would leave information into these truths, and are desirous of more distinct light and knowledge into that blessed book, and Prophecy of the Revelation, so fully declaring the condition and state of the church in these last times._

His Progenitors

This very curious title indicates much curious matter, and it is to be regretted that it is not now to be procured, though it is hoped it may be preserved by some person who would render the public a service by making it known, as it proves how confidently the spiritual and personal reign of Christ were at that time expected: and also that the events of that period furnished ingenious persons with a clue to the mysteries of the prophecies, which they believed to be fulfilling as confidently as many writers of the present day, who apply them to the conquests of the French Emperor.

It is supposed that Mr. D_Anvers descended from a family of distinction in Wiltshire, and that the following person mentioned in *Fuller's Worthies of England*, p 53, was one of his progenitors *if not his father*.._Henry D_Anvers.His ensuing epitaph on his monument in the church of Dantsey, in this Shire, will better acquaint the reader with his deserts, than any character which my pen can give of him.Here lieth the body of Henry D_Anvers, second son of Sir John D_Anvers, Knight, and Dame Elizabeth daughter and co-heir to Neville Lord Latimer.He was born at Dantsey in the county of Wilts, Jan. Anno. Dom. 1573, being bred up in the *low country* wars under Maurice Earl of Nassau, afterward Prince of Orange; and in many other military actions of those times both by sea and by land.He was made a captain in the wars of France and then knighted for his good service under Henry 1V. the then French king.He was employed as Lieutenant of the Horse, and Sergeant Major of the whole army in Ireland, under Robert Earl of Essex, and Charles Baron of Mountgay in the reign of Queen Elizabeth.

Succesor to Mr. D Anvers.

By king James 1 he was made Baron of Dantsey, and Peer of this realm, as also Lord President of Munster, and Governor of Guernsey.By king Charles 1 he was created Earl of Danby, made of his Privy Council and knight of the most noble order of the Garter. In his latter time by reason of his imperfect health, considerably declining more active employments full of honours, wounds, and days, he died Anno. Dom. 1643.*Laus. Deo.*

Edward Man.Mr. D_Anvers was succeeded by Mr. Edward Man in 1687.This circumstance is collected from an ancient manuscript.His name is signed as pastor of a church in Houndsditch both in 1689 and 1692, Vol I p 507, and also to the resolutions concerning the fund proposed to be raised by the churches composing the general Assembly Vol I p 478.We have no further account of him, or of the church, unless this was one of the two churches which being destitute of pastors agreed to unite under the ministry of Mr. John Noble about the year 1696.As it will be impossible at this distance of time to trace the exact succession of our ministers in London, we shall place their history where it most naturally falls, and on this account think it proper to introduce this worthy man in the history of the church of Crutched-friars.

John Noble.It appears that he became the pastor of a church at Tallow Chandler_s Hall, Dowgate Hill, in 1690 composed of two congregations, each of which was so well satisfied with his ministry as to invite him to become the pastor, and both of which united into one Society rather than not enjoy the benefits of his very acceptable ministry.

Character of Mr. Noble

In this station he was preserved with great honour, integrity, and usefulness, for about thirty four years; in all which time he truly manifested himself a minister of the grace of Christ. He was removed by death June 12, 1730, in the 71st year of his age. He was buried in the ground belonging to the Park meeting, Southwark, and his funeral sermon was preached by Mr. Edward Wallin, from Phil 1:21. *For me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.*

In this discourse Mr. Wallin gives a particular account of Mr. Nobles's religious character. He says _that in the early part of his life, which was a time of persecution, he used to attend his religious parents to the worship of God, and was with them and others apprehended and sent to the common goal. Here he suffered great hardships from the enemies of religion and liberty, concerning which he used to say that though he suffered for the profession of religion, yet at that time he was destitute of the saving knowledge of Christ.; and would observe, that a religious education, a mere profession, and zeal for a piety [?] might carry persons a great length in suffering for christianity, while they were strangers to themselves and the powerful influences of the grace of the gospel. His imprisonment, however, was made the occasion of his conversion to God, and in this place of confinement he pursued his studies in useful knowledge which was afterwards so conspicuous in his preaching and defending the great truths of the gospel. After obtaining his liberty he attended to the laws of Christ, being baptized on a profession of faith and uniting himself with a gospel church. The church perceiving his capacity for the ministry soon called him to it, and for some time he preached occasionally to several churches in the country among whom he was very useful.

Mr. Noble s Sentiments

During this period he kept a grammar school, that he might preach the gospel with less charge to poor churches. In London his ministry was very acceptable. _His light and knowledge in the gospel (says Mr. Wallin) was very considerable and much exceeded some who yet are to be honoured as ministers of Christ. _The grace of Christ was his delightful subject; he would speak of this with an holy zeal, and fervor of spirit, as one who had tasted this grace himself, and desired in preaching it commend himself to every man_s conscience in the sight of God.

Mr. Wallin gives an intimation that some who opposed the doctrines he preached, insinuated they gave a liberty to sin, and lessened a due regard for the discharge of moral or religious duties. This Mr. Wallin contradicts by saying, _Although he could not allow the very best performances to be any part of the soul_s justifying righteousness, yet he esteemed them the genuine fruits of the Spirit of Christ, and a means to adorn the doctrines of God our Saviour; therefore he would frequently argue the saints_ obligation to the precepts of the gospel for the mercies of God, the love of Christ, and the riches of grace discovered to them, to the end that believers may honour their Redeemer by all gospel obedience. _In Mr. Nobles_s last illness he expressed a cheerful resignation to the divine pleasure, declaring that the truths he had preached to others were the comfort and support of his own soul in the near views of death and eternity.

Crosby says of Mr. Noble, he was a man of learning and excellent parts, and noted for his peculiarity respecting some controverted doctrines. His zeal in defense of his own opinions sometimes led him to uncharitableness respecting those that differed from him. This however only appeared in his own pulpit; when preaching for others he discovered an uncommon moderation. In the meeting of the Baptist Ministers in and about London, who met monthly to consult about the Baptist interest in general, any who knew his zeal for the doctrines he preached, were astonished at the prudence and moderation he manifested. An instance of this is given by Crosby, that though he was much opposed to the practice of laying on of hands at the ordination of ministers, yet he assisted at the ordination of Mr. John Gill, where this was observed. He preached at the ordination of this justly celebrated man, afterwards, Dr. Gill, from *Acts 20:28*

During Mr. Noble's ministry, between the year 1727 and 1730, the church removed from Tallow Chandler's hall to Maiden-head Court, Great-East Cheap.

Church at Wapping

This church was founded September 12, 1633, and was composed of persons who separated from the Independent church of which Mr. Henry Jessey was pastor. The account of this transaction has been given Vol. I. p. 138. We know but little of its ministers; but its first pastor was:

Mr. Spilsbury.

John Spilsbury. He appears to have been an eminent minister among the Baptists, till after the Restoration in 1660, as his name frequently occurs in the events recorded in their history. The last mention we have of him is his signing the Declaration against Venner's Rebellion. Crosby says it was falsely reported that Mr. Spilsbury had gone to Holland to receive baptism from Mr. John Smyth in order to become properly qualified to administer baptism to his friends who seceded with him. Some remarks on the manner in which the ancient immersion was introduced at the origin of the Baptist churches may be found Vol. I. p. 138-140. We have no account of the time of Mr. Spilsbury's death. He published a *treatise on Baptism* which we have not seen.

Reply to Mr. Featly.

Samuel Richardson. It is probable from his name being signed with that of Mr. Spilsbury's to the *Confession of Faith* that he was his colleague. He published a Pamphlet in reply to Dr. Featly's virulent work against the Baptists. This consists of 18 quarto pages, and is entitled, *Some brief considerations on Doctor Featly his Book, subtitled, The Dipper Dipt, wherein, in some measure, is discovered his many great and false accusations of divers persons, commonly called Anabaptists, with an Answer to them, and some brief reasons for their practices.* This is a spirited reply to the Doctor's scandalous charges, which he challenges him to make good. We give the following extracts. Among other things the Doctor had charged the Baptists with being *an impure and carnal sect.* To this Mr. R. answers, *If you please to join issue with us, we will confine ourselves to this kingdom, whether your Sect of Priests, or us be most guilty of*

uncleanness, and upon that side it falls by the clearest proof, shall with my consent, be chronicled for the filthy and unclean Sect._ (See a Work entitled, _The first Century of Scandalous Ministers; by order of the Assembly of Divines._) The Doctor had said, _They dip one another after their manner with a kind of spell, containing the heads of their erroneous tenets, and their engaging themselves in their schismatical covenants._ _We answer (says Mr. R.) the manner of our baptizing is as the Apostles was, and there is no other words expressed in our baptizing than which is expressed in the 28th of Matthew part of the 19th verse, and no mention of any tenets much less erroneous ones; nor words of any covenants are mentioned at all. We confess when any is to be baptized at the water side, the administrator goeth to prayer suitable to the occasion, and after go both into the water, and use the words above-mentioned; and coming forth again they go to prayer again, and also return thanks to God, and how this can be a spell we cannot see._ p. 4. Mr. Richardson published another work entitled, _The necessity of Toleration in matters of Religion. 1647._ (Lewis's *History of Anabap.* p. 100.)

Church in Great St. Helens

Of the celebrated minister who founded the church first assembling here we are enabled to give a more particular account.

Mr. Knollys.

Hansard Knollys. This eminent servant of the Lord Jesus Christ spent upwards of seventy years in the ministry, and more than fifty as the pastor of a baptist church in London: He was born at Chalkwell in Lincolnshire in 1598, of parents who were religious and in good circumstances. Desirous of cultivating his mind with literary and religious knowledge, his father kept a tutor in the house, who being a godly conscientious man gave him good instructions. He appears to have been early under strong convictions of sin, but it was not till after he went to College at Cambridge that he was made savingly acquainted with the way of salvation by faith in Christ. He says, _I now began to search diligently the holy scriptures, became acquainted with gracious christians, then called puritans; kept several days of fasting and prayer, wherein I did humble myself for my sins and begged pardon and grace of God for Christ's sake; grew strict in performing holy duties, and in reformation of my life._

Receives Ordination.

When he was about 21 years of age he applied to the bishop of Peterborough for ordination, and after preaching sixteen sermons by way of trial he was ordained a presbyter June 30, 1629.

The bishop of Lincoln soon after presented him to the living of Humberstone, where he preached twice every Lord's Day, and once every holy-day for several years. About 1631 he began to doubt the propriety of his conformity to some things enjoined in the church to which he was obliged to attend. He considered it sinful to use the surplice, the cross in baptism, and to admit wicked persons to the Lord's supper. He accordingly

resigned his living to the bishop, who offered him a better, but he told him he could do nothing but preach, which was connived at two or three years. At length he concluded that the ordination he had received from the bishop was not right, and therefore renounced it and silenced himself; _resolving, says he, not to preach any more till I had a clear call and commission from Christ to preach the gospel._

After relating many painful exercises of mind upon this subject, and stating the benefit he received from Mr. Wheelwright, a silenced minister, he says, _I began to preach the doctrine of free grace, according to the tenor of the new and everlasting covenant, for three or four years together, whereby very many sinners were converted, and many believers were established in the faith._ During this time he preached at Woodenderby, at Fulleby on the hill, and at Wainfleet, till in 1636 he was apprehended at Boston by virtue of a warrant from the High Commission Court, and kept a prisoner in the person_s house who sever the warrant; but, says Mr. Knollys, _God helped me to convince him, and he was so greatly terrified in his conscience that he set open the doors and let me go away._

Removed to America.

He now removed to London, and from thence with his wife and child to New England. On their voyage they endured many difficulties, and after they arrived they were reduced to great poverty. The Magistrates of Boston were informed by the Ministers that he was an Antinomian, and were desired to send him away. He was, however, providentially invited to Piscattuah, where he preached about four years, and then at the invitation of his aged father returned to England at the close of the year 1641. Mather, in his history of America, speaks of Mr. Knollys in very high terms, saying that _his name ought to live in their books for his piety, and that he had a respectful character among the churches in that wilderness._

The Massacre in Ireland had just taken place; and the next year the war broke out in England between the King and the Parliament. He mentions some very remarkable providences at this time by which he and his family were supported in the midst of heavy afflictions. At length through the kindness of christian friends he collected a considerable school on great Tower Hill, and soon afterwards was chosen Master of Mary-Axe free school. _With one year, says he, I had above seven-score scholars and sixteen boarders; which free school and all the benefits thereof, I left to go into the parliament_s army, and preached freely to the common soldiers, till I did perceive the commanders sought their own things more than the cause of God and his people, breaking their vows and solemn engagements._

Opposed by the Presbyterians.

Mr. Knollys returning to London resumed his old employment of teaching school, by which he obtained a comfortable support. He now preached for some time in the public churches with great approbation; but the Assembly of Divines disapproving of his preaching against a national church, an established uniformity and infant baptism, gave him much trouble, an account of which has been given in Vol. I. p. 173.

Finding he could not continue to preach in the churches, he withdrew and opened a meeting-house in Great St. Helens. His congregation was large, seldom less than a thousand hearers. A baptist church was formed about two or three years afterwards. He was ordained over it in 1645, and continued to preach among them except when prevented by imprisonment and other persecutions, till his death.

The life of this good man was little less than a constant scene of vexation and distress; especially after the Restoration of the King. The mad insurrection of Venner and his frantic associates, supplied a pretext to the court to punish the obnoxious nonconformists; and in this persecution Mr. Knollys had his full share. At this time he was imprisoned in Newgate for eighteen weeks. Upwards of four hundred godly and peaceable persons were confined with him, who knew nothing of the design, till at the King's coronation they were all set at liberty.

Removes to Holland.

Unable to live in quiet, he removed with his family to Holland, and from thence went into Germany where they continued two or three years.

While he was absent from England one Colonel Legge, a lieutenant of the ordinance, brought an action against him in the court of Exchequer for keeping a house and ground from the king. Unable to procure it by law the Colonel sent his soldiers to take forcible possession. These premises had cost Mr. Knollys seven hundred pounds; which with two hundred pounds which he had in Weaver's-hall were given to the king. While on the continent he incurred very heavy expenses, and met with some remarkable providences in his favour. Coming again to London he returned to his old employment of teaching, and through a divine blessing, which he gratefully acknowledged, provided things honest, necessary, and convenient for his family. It is truly remarkable that he could realize so much property under all his disadvantages. He enumerates what he had been enabled to procure for his family as follows. _To my eldest son I had given sixty pounds per annum during life, which he enjoyed about twenty one years ere he died. To my next son that lived to be married, I gave the full value of two hundred and fifty pounds in money, house, school, and household goods, and left him fifty scholars in the school-house. To my only daughter then living, I gave upon her marriage above three hundred pounds in money, annuity, plate, linen, and household-stuffs, and left her husband fifty scholars in the said school-house, in partnership with my said son. To my youngest son that lived to be married, I gave more than three hundred pounds sterling; besides it cost me sixty pounds in his apprenticeship, and forty pounds afterwards.

Thus my heavenly Father made up my former losses with his future blessings, even in outward substance, besides a good increase of grace and experience, in the space of forty years, that I and my dear faithful wife lived together; we removed several times with our whole family, whereof once from Lincolnshire to London, and from London to New England; once from England into Wales; twice from London into Lincolnshire, once from London to Holland, and from thence into Germany, and thence to Rotterdam, and thence into London again. In which removings I gained great experience of God's faithfulness, goodness, and truth, in his great and precious promises: and I have gained some experience of my own heart's deceitfulness, and the power of my own corruptions, and the reigning power of Christ, and his captivating and subduing my sins, making conquests of the devil, world, and sin, and then giving me the victory; and causing me to triumph, and to bless his most holy name. Three things made my latter sufferings very easy to be endured. 1. The former straits and hardships which I had undergone with patience. 2. The present lively acts and exercise of grace, especially faith, and hope, under those latter and greater trials. 3. The light of God's countenance, and the full assurance of his love, and of eternal life. I would not want those experiences and teachings, that my soul hath enjoyed, for all that ever I suffered.

His usefulness.

This excellent man was also very laborious in his ministerial labour. He most commonly preached three or four times a week, if in any measure of health, for upwards of forty years, and when in prison, if well, he preached every day. _And God was pleased, says he. To confirm my call unto that great work: 1. By the conversion of many sinners, who having declared the dealings of God with their souls, testified God did convince them, convert them, and establish them by my ministry, through the powerful and effectual operation of his Holy Spirit, and word preached by me unto them. 2. By some healing power of God, put forth upon the sick and infirm bodies of several persons, who were suddenly restored to health, immediately in time of prayer with them, or by and through faith in Jesus Christ, especially in this city of London, and of the sickness called the plague, both in former years, and in the year 1665. Not to me, but to God, be given glory and praise, for in his name, through faith in his name, they were healed. 3. By enabling me, standing by me, and strengthening me, by his Holy Spirit, and sanctifying grace, to preach the gospel in season and out of season with all boldness; neither being ashamed nor afraid to bear my testimony for Christ, his gospel, churches, ministry, worship, and ordinances, against the antichristian powers, ministers, worshippers, and traditions of the beast, the great mystical whore, and the false prophet. Nor have I been terrified by the adversary._

Imprisoned.

When the Act against conventicles was passed, 1670, he was taken at a meeting in George Yard, and committed to the Compter, Bishopsgate Street. Obtaining favor in the eyes of the keepers he had liberty to preach twice every day in the common hall, and most of the prisoners came to hear him, and some of them blessed God that he was sent to the prison. He was soon after set at liberty at the Old Bailey Sessions.

No sooner had this storm blown over but he was again exercised with heavy family afflictions. The following account which he gives of his recovery from a dangerous illness may be thought by some to indicate an enthusiastic mind; there can be however no doubt that he and the other excellent ministers engaged considered themselves as practicing a gospel ordinance, and depended upon Christ for his blessing to attend it.

Anointing with Oil.

_Two learned, well-practiced, and judicious Doctors of physic had daily visited me, and consulted several days together, and I was fully persuaded that they did what they possibly could to effect a cure: and knew also, that God did not succeed their honest and faithful endeavours with his blessing. Although God had given a signal and singular testimony of his special blessing by each of them unto others of their patients, at least sixteen, at the same time, I resolved to take no more physic, but would apply to that holy ordinance of God appointed by Jesus Christ, the great Physician of value, in James v. 14, 15. _Is any sick among you? Let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord: and the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him:_ and I sent for Mr. Kiffen, and Mr. Vavasor Powell, who prated over me, and anointed me with oil in the name of the Lord. The Lord did hear prayer, and heal me; for there were many godly ministers and gracious saints that prayed day and night for me, (with submission to the will of God,) that the Lord would spare my life, and make me

more serviceable to his church, and to his saints, whose prayers God heard; and as an answer to their prayers I was perfectly healed, but remained weak long after._

Shortly after his wife, who had been so many years the companion of his sorrows, was removed by death April 30, 1671, and the same year, November 15, he lost his only son. An Epitaph on the grave stone of Mrs. K. is preserver in Maitland_s history of London. p. 772.

_Anne Knollys, daughter of John Cleney, Esq. wife of Honserd Knollys, minister of the gospel, by whom he had issue seven sons and three daughters. She died April 30, 1671.

My only Wife that in her life,
Liv_d forty years with me,
Lives now in rest, for ever blest
With immortality.
My dear is gone, left me alone,
For Christ to do and dye,
Who died for me, and died to be
My Saviour God most high._

General Assembly.

The next year Mt. Knollys wrote the part of his life from whence the above is extracted, and intimates that he expected either to be imprisoned again, or forced to fly his country: in this he was not disappointed. In 1684 he was in prison many months, neither his age nor former sufferings could screen him from the malice of these, who to introduce despotism and popery, were the enemies of all who were zealous to defend civil and religious liberty. An instance of the firmness of Mr. Knollys and his friends is recorded Vol. I. p. 411.

Mr. Knollys however survived all these political persecutions, and we find him after the Revolution in 1688 particularly active in promoting the Union and prosperity of the Baptist Churches by a general Assembly in London. His church met at this period at Broken Wharf.

From what he had said in his life it appears that he was highly favored by the gracious supports of the Saviour. Under all his afflictions he enjoyed abundant consolation and good hope through grace. We give the following short extract from his life which discovers the spirituality of his mind.

His Character.

_My wilderness, sea, city, and prison-mercies, afforded me very many and strong consolations. The spiritual sights of the glory of God, the divine sweetness of the spiritual and providential presence of my Lord Jesus Christ, and the joys and comforts of the holy and eternal Spirit, communicated to my soul, together with suitable and seasonable scriptures of truth, have so often, and so powerfully revived, refreshed, and strengthened my heart in the days of my pilgrimage, trials and sufferings, that the sense, yea, the life and sweetness thereof, abides still upon my heart, and hath engaged my soul to live by faith, to walk humbly, and to desire and endeavour to excel in holiness to God_s glory and the example of others. Though I confess many of the Lord_s ministers, and some of the Lord_s people have excelled and outshined me, with whom God had not been at so much cost, not pains, as he hath been with me. I am a very unprofitable servant, but yet by grace I am what I am._

Mr. Kiffin who well knew him for upwards of fifty-four years has given the following sketch of his pastoral character.

—He was chosen an Elder to a congregation in London, with whom he laboured for easy fifty years, under many difficulties that attended him; but neither the poverty of the church, nor the persecution that he endured, were any temptation to him to neglect his duty towards them, but he was willing to be poor with them in their poverty, and to suffer with them in their sufferings. He was willing to labour for his own, and his family's bread, by keeping a school, when the church was not able to supply his wants, although he wanted not opportunities to have advanced himself in the world if he would have accepted them; but like a faithful Pastor he chose rather to be poor and suffer affliction, than to leave the duty and the work he was called unto, until he arrived to the age of above ninety years. When he found weaknesses attend him, his love and affection to that poor church was such, that he was daily exercising his thoughts to find an able minister for them in his room; declaring to several of his friends what great satisfaction it would be to him to see one settled amongst them; and that he would be willing to part with something of that little which he had, (if there was a need,) for his maintenance from the church, towards his support: and it pleased God to provide one for them, to their great satisfaction and rejoicing. So great was his natural affection and tender care for his daughter and grand-children, who he knew were like to come to some distress, that he did accordingly at that great age again undertake the teaching of a school, that he might do to the uttermost of his ability to provide for them.—

Notwithstanding, the various engagements of Mr. Knollys he found time to publish many works, the titles of which are given below. (Works. 1. Christ exalted; a lost sinner sought and saved by Christ; God's people an holy people; being the sum of divers sermons preached in Suffolk. 4to. 1646. 2. The Shining of a flaming against the ground of new baptism, in his book entitled, The Smoke of the Temple, 4to. 1646. 3. The World that now is, and that which is to come. 8vo. 16--. 4. Grammaticæ, Latinæ, Græcæ, and Hebraicæ, compendium; rhetoricæ ad umbratio; item radices Græcæ and Hebraicæ, omnes quæ in sacra Scripture vetus et novi Testamenti occurrant. 8ov. 1665. 5. The Parable of the kingdom of Heaven expounded. Matt. xxv, 1-3. 8ov. 1664. 6. An Exposition of the whole book of the Revelations. 4to. 1668. 7. An Essay of sacred Rhetoric, used by the Holy Spirit in the scriptures of truth. 8vp. 1675. 8. A small piece in defence of singing the praises of God. 8vo. 16--. 9. A Preface to Mr. Collier's book, entitled, The Exaltation of Christ. 8vo. 1647. 10. A Preface to Mr. Keach's Instructions for children. 12mo. 1664. 11. His last Legacy to the church; written a little before his death. 12. Some Account of his own Life, written with his own hand, to the year 1672. N. B. The two last were posthumous. Mr. Granger remarks on No. I. and II. —If the reader should have patience to peruse these two very singular pieces, he will most probably be of opinion, that there is much more smoke than fire in them both.— *Granger's Biog. Hist. of England*, Vol. III. p. 338 Mr. Granger's remark may be wit, but he has given no proof of its being reason.) The only one we have seen, except his life preserved in the Gospel Magazines for 1771, and lately republished, is —The Parable of the Kingdom of Heaven,— to which his Portrait was prefixed, taken at the age of 67.

Sentiments of Mr. Knollys.

This little work discovers considerable knowledge of the scriptures, and proves that the mind of the writer was much imbued with the spirit of the gospel. Mr. Knollys

has plainly stated his sentiments on a subject at that time much talked about, and made the occasion of great obloquy and persecution falling on the churches, viz. The coming of Christ as the King of his church to establish universal dominion in the Earth. We give the following short extract from p. 85, 86, by which it appears that his opinion on this subject was not different from that of Dr. Gill, and others.

_There are three special kinds and times of Christ_s coming, 1. His coming in the form of a servant in the days of his flesh. Phil. 2:7.2. His coming as a Judge at the last day, when he shall judge the quick and the dead, 2 Tim. 4:1. called his appearing the second time. Both these are his personal appearances, or his coming in his own person. But between these two appearances or comings of Christ in his own person, there is witnessed by the Holy Prophets and Apostles, and recorded in the holy Scripture of truth, another kind of Christ_s coming at another time. And that is his coming as the Bridegroom, and as the only Potentate, King of Kings and Lord of Lords. 1 Tim. 6:14, 15. Rev. 19:16. which is his virtual, spiritual, powerful, and glorious coming in his saints and sanction, by them to marry his *Jerusalem*. Isa. 62:4, 5. So shall thy sons marry thee, and with them to reign over the nations and kingdoms of the world a thousand years on the Earth. Rev. 11:15, 16, 17._

Robert Steed. It appears he had been for some time associated with Mr. Knollys in the pastoral office, and is mentioned as a Messenger from the church to the general Assembly in 1689. In 1704 the church was destitute, so that Mr. Steed must either have died or quitted his station. During his time the church removed to Bagnio Court. Mr. Steed published a piece on singing the praises of God in the public Assembly. He was succeeded by Mr. Crossley.

Glazier_s Hall*

One of the earliest of our churches assembled here, and was called the Glass-house church. It was here that Mr. John Miles, and Mr. Thomas Proud were baptized in 1649, who were afterwards so useful in Wales. See Vol 1 p 235. The pastors at this period were Mr. William Cousett, and Mr. Edward Draper, both of whom died in Ireland. We suspect this last name should have been Drapes. There was a work published in London in 1649, by a Baptist minister, entitled, *Gospel glory proclaimed before the sons of men, in the visible and invisible worship of God. Wherein the mystery of God in Christ, and his royal, spiritual government over the souls and bodies of his Saints is clearly discovered, plainly asserted, and faithfully vindicated, against the deceiver and his servants, who endeavour the cessation thereof, upon what pretence soever.* By Edward Drapes, an unworthy Servant of the gospel of Christ. This is a quarto Volume of 169 pages, and proves the writer to have been a man of considerable talents. It is dedicated _to the churches of Christ in London, and in truth according to the commandment of the everlasting God; especially to the particular Society of whom I am a member._

*It was situated in Thames Street. Stow_s *Survey of London*, Strype_s Ed. Vol 11 p 317.

Mr. William Rider

We have no further account of this church, but think it probable that the people with whom Mr Benjamin Keach afterwards settled were originally part of it. Crosby says, _they had separated from one of the most ancient congregations in London in the year 1652_ Their first pastor was Mr. William rider, who published a small tract in vindication of laying on of hands on baptized believers. For several years after his death the church was destitute, and was considerably reduced, but though few in number, _they had the reputation, says Crosby, of being a people of solid judgement and substantial religion, and some of them in very good circumstances as to earthly possessions._ This was their situation when divine providence directed them to select _

Mr. Benjamin Keach

Benjamin Keach. This faithful servant of Christ, was the son of John Keach of Stokchaman in Buckinghamshire. He was born in the town February 29, 1640. His parents were pious and honest persons, but unable to procure him an education suited to his genius and the station he was destined to occupy. He was at first designed for business, and for a little time he was engaged in following a trade; but it was soon perceived he aspired after a higher employment. He applied himself very early to the study of the scriptures, and was desirous of attaining divine knowledge. Observing the silence of the sacred oracles on the subject of infant baptism, he suspected the validity of the baptism he had received, and after seriously considering the subject, he was baptized in the fifteenth year of his age, and afterwards joined a baptist church somewhere in that county.

The church discovering his piety and talents, about three years afterwards, in 1658, called him to the solemn work of the ministry. He was now in his 18th year, and for about two years he pursued his work with great comfort and success, and much to the edification of those who heard him. At this time he held the sentiments of the Remonstrants, or Arminians, of the extent of the death of Christ; and the freedom of man_s will. The Baptists in the part where he lived were in general of this opinion, and from them he derived the sentiment and for a time maintained it; till on coming to London, where he had an opportunity of consulting both men and books, he found that the different opinions upon these subjects had given rise to two denominations of Baptists. Examining this point more closely, he in a few years came to a clear understanding of the calvinistic sentiments and continued to maintain them during life.

Being of an active mind, he very soon attracted the notice of the enemies of the Nonconformists after the Restoration of the king. In 1664 he printed and published a small catechism, entitled, _A new and easy Primmer, &c._ To this Mr. Knollis prefixed a preface. When he began to circulate it at Winslow, where he resided, an information was laid against him, which ended in his imprisonment. He was also impilloried both at Aylesbury and Winslow. For an account of his shameful trial the Reader is referred to Vol 1 p 340.

Mr. Keach persecuted.

These sufferings in the cause of truth and righteousness did not intimidate Mr. Keach. Two years afterwards, 1666, he published a small Poem, entitled, *Zion in distress; or the groans of the true Protestant Church*. He says in the preface _that he perceived Popery was ready to bud, and would, if God prevented not, spring up afresh in the land._ Being greatly harassed by his persecutors, and no prospect of enjoying any thing like a quiet settlement in the work of the ministry, he resolved, as he had not accepted the pastoral office in any church, to remove to London, where he thought he should have greater opportunities to be useful. Accordingly he turned his effects into money, and with his wife and children left Buckinghamshire in 1668; but in his way thither the coach was beset with highwaymen, who compelled all the Passengers to alight and robbed them of every thing of value. This afflictive circumstance must have been very trying to him and Mrs. K. as they were now with three children in a strange place without money, and almost without any acquaintance in London. He however found friends who relieved his necessities, and also enabled him with the other passengers to bring an action against the county for the recovery of their loss: in which they were successful.

He had not been long in London before he was invited to settle with a congregation in the Borough, and in a few months after he undertook the pastoral office among them and was solemnly ordained by imposition of hands in 1668, being then 28 years of age. From this account we learn that the troublous time which passed over our forefathers did not prevent him from attending to the discipline of the churches with the greatest regularity and order.

Ordained in London

The congregation with whom he laboured usually met at this time at a private house in Tooley Street, the better to conceal themselves from their persecutors.

During four years after the settlement of Mr. Keach they were obliged to meet from house to house, and though very careful to prevent being discovered, they were twice disturbed and some of them indicted to appear to the Quarters Sessions, as has been already related, Vol. I. p. 384.

In 1672, when the declaration of Indulgence was published, they built a Meeting-house at the corner of Stoney Lane Horsly Down. It pleased God to give such success to the ministry of Mr. Keach that they soon increased so considerably that the place was frequently enlarged, till it became sufficiently capacious to contain nearly a thousand people.

From this period to the Revolution in 1688, Mr. Keach took a lively interest in everything which related to the Protestant Interest, and embraced every opportunity to expose the iniquitous scenes that were transacted for the introduction of Popery. It was during this period that he published some of his most celebrated little works, entitled, *The Travels of true godliness, and the Travels of Ungodliness*, which continue to be read with interest at

the present time. In 1680 he published a second Edition of *Sion in distress, &c.* considerably enlarged. In this he says, *I shewed the cause of her calamities, with an enumeration of some prevailing sins, together with the plots and contrivances of Rome against Sion.*

Rejoices in the Revolution

These books met with very general acceptance. After the glorious Revolution he published another poem in 1689, dedicated *To their most excellent Majesties William and Mary*. This was entitled, *Distressed Sion relieved, or the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness. Wherein are discovered the grand causes of the churches trouble and misery under the late doleful dispensation. With a complete history of, and lamentation for, those renowned worthies that fell in England by Popish Rage and cruelty, from the year 1680 to 1688. Together with an account of the late admirable and stupendous providence which hath wrought such a sudden and wonderful deliverance for this nation, and God's Sion therein.*

In this little book is a wood Engraving representing the King about to take ship and leave the kingdom, followed by the Pope, a Cardinal, and Priest; and in another view some one with a bag, while the victorious William and his army are driving them all out.

When the extraordinary events of this Revolution are considered we are not surprized at the exuberance of joy manifested by Mr. Keach, and all the Dissenters who were delivered by it from so much misery. *We do believe* (says he in the address to the Reader) *that their present Majesties are raised up to be glorious instruments in the hand of God beyond what some (_tis like) may suppose; nor do I doubt, but that the slain witnesses are a getting out of their graves; time will open things clearer to us; but I am sure we cannot sufficiently adore the divine goodness for that salvation wrought by his own right hand. Let us strive to be thankful to God, and labour to live in love one with another, and improve the present providence; for since God hath graciously been pleased to do wonders for us, let us endeavour to do some great things for him.*

Writes against Mr. Baxter

Mr. Keach was a very zealous baptist, and appears to have taken an active part in the general Assemblies held in London in 1689, &c. He was requested by the Association to visit the baptized churches, in several parts of the kingdom, and to preach the gospel to them. In this journey he was accompanied by Mr. Benjamin Dennis, and it was attended with great success. His zeal for the baptist denomination appeared by writing in defence of it; by encouraging ministers who came to him from all parts of the kingdom; and by getting several meeting-houses erected for the worship of God. One at Limehouse, another at Rotherhithe; one in White Street, Southwark, and another at Barkin in Essex.

The first work he published on the subject of baptism was in 1674. This was a single sheet, and entitled, *Mr. Baxter's arguments for believers' baptism*. These were collected out of Mr. Baxter's piece in *Confirmation*, with a few remarks in the margin on

the force of his arguments. This had a very extensive circulation, and is noticed by Mr. Baxter at the end of his treatise entitled, *More proofs of infant church membership, and right to baptism.* And he complains of it as hard usage. As I am writing this (says he) the hawkers are crying under my window, *Mr. Baxter's arguments for believers' baptism.* The man that cites authors at this rate cites me against myself with the like confidence, because I have proved in my treatise of *Confirmation*, the necessity of personal profession in the *adult*; and he that will think that such dealing as this doth need an answer, that if the *adult* will make an intelligent profession, *infants* must not be baptized, let him be aggrieved, for I have no time to satisfy him. Though Mr. Baxter was offended that his self contradictions should be exposed, surely he need not have been surprized that the Baptists whom he had treated with so much severity and scurrility should avail themselves of it.

Opposes Mr. Burkit

Let the reader judge from the following quotation from his *answer to Mr. Blake*, whether there were not good ground for it. If there be (says he) no example given in scripture of any one that was *baptized* without the profession of a saving faith; nor any precept for so doing, then must not we baptize any without it; but the *antecedentis* true, therefore so is the *consequent.*

In 1692 Mr. Keach was engaged in a controversy on the same subject with the Rev. Mr. Burkit, rector of Milden in Suffolk, and the well-known author of the exposition of the New Testament.

The circumstances which led to this were as follows. Mr. John Tredwell a baptist minister of Mr. Keach's acquaintance, was invited to take the care of a small congregation at *Lavingham*. This person was of unblemished life and conversation, and a very solid useful preacher. Several persons being converted by his ministry and joining his church, Mr. Burkit, whose parish adjoined, was greatly offended, and warned his people against the dangerous principles and practices of this sect, and cast many unjust and uncharitable reflections both upon his neighbours and their opinions. Mr. Tredwell, who esteemed the character of Mr. Burkit, wrote him a friendly letter, persuading him to desist from such methods, so derogating from the character and reputation he bore in the world; telling him that they had sufficient ground from scripture for their practice, and that scolding was not a likely way to promote truth. Mr. Tredwell hoped to bring him to friendly measures, but in this he was disappointed, as Mr. Burkit soon after came into the meeting-house when they were assembled for public worship, accompanied with several of his parishioners, and demanded of him to hear the doctrines he had reflected upon and called anti scriptural.

Mr. Burkit's Slander

Mr. Tredwell surprized at such a riotous and tumultuous challenge, however agreed that he should have liberty to assert and vindicate his opinions, provided he might afterwards have liberty of make a reply. Upon this Mr. Burkit began with a short prayer, and then for

two hours discoursed upon *Infant baptism*, and when he had done departed with his company without giving Mr. Tredwell time to answer.

Soon after Mr. Burkit published the substance of this harangue, and entitled it, *An argumentative and practical discourse of infant baptism*. This was intermixed with false stories of the Baptists and unchristian reflections cast upon them.

Mr. Tredwell on this applied to Mr. Keach, and requested him to undertake to answer it: which he soon after did, and entitled it, *The Rector rectified and corrected*.

To this work Mr. Tredwell prefixed an Epistle addressed to Mr. Burkit, dated Preston Place, April 30, 1692, in which he mentions the above circumstances, and also quotes a charge which Mr. Burkit had brought against him and the Baptists in general. _Since the late general liberty (says Mr. B) the Anabaptists thinking themselves there by let loose upon us, have disperst themselves into several counties, endeavouring to draw away our people from us, by persuading them to renounce their first dedication to God in baptism, and to enter their communion after the way of dipping. One of their teaching disciples (meaning myself, says Mr. T) having set up in our neighbourhood for making proselytes, by re-baptizing them in a nasty horse-pond, into which the filth of the adjacent stable occasionally flows, and out of which his deluded converts come forth with so much filthiness upon them that they rather resembled creatures arising out of the bottomless pit, than candidates for holy baptism: and all this before a promiscuous multitude before the light of the sun._

Slander repelled.

It is really awful to reflect on this desperate wickedness from such a man as Mr. Burkit, in publishing such an untruth to the world. _It seems to me (says Mr. T.) that you neither regard your own reputation, nor keeping a good conscience before God: you ought to repent of this your great rashness in asserting such abominable falsehoods._

To counteract the influence of this vile slander, the following declaration was published. *A Certificate under the hands of several sober and impartial persons.* _Whereas Mr. Burkit, of Milden, in the county of Suffolk, hath (in his late book called, *An argumentative and practical discourse of infant baptism*,) very unjustly reproached the people called Anabaptists, and in particular Mr. John Tredwell (Preacher of God's word) declaring that the said John Tredwell hath lately at Kittle-Baston, in the said county of Suffolk, baptized several persons in a nasty horse-pond, into which the filth of the adjacent stable occasionally flows, and that the people baptized in the said pond, came forth with much mud and filthiness upon them, &c. We whose names are hereunto subscribed, do solemnly certify and declare to the whole world, that those reports and assertions of the said Mr. Burkit are utterly and notoriously false; for we taking a strict view of the said pond and stable, find the dung or filth of the said stable runs the quite contrary way from the pond into the road.

Mr. Russen's Slander.

_Moreover we solemnly certify and declare, that the persons baptized in the said pond, came forth without the least speck or spot of dirt upon their clothes, the water being clean. In witness whereof, we have set our hands this 3rd day of May, 1692.

JOHN TYRIL, Sen. Gent.

WILLIAM BROWN.

SAMUEL DENNY.

DAVID SARE, Jun.

THOMAS CABLE.

THOMAS GAME.

WILLIAM STEWARD.

WILLIAM BORAM.

THOMAS WELE.

THOMAS ROSS.

JOHN NOBLE.

Thus the filth which Mr. Burkit wished to cast on others fastened on himself. He had not, however, the honesty to publish a retractation, nor the courage to reply to Mr. Keach_s arguments.

Mr. Keach wrote against several other Paedobaptist ministers, and was generally treated with respect. In one instance, however, towards the latter part of his life he was treated with very great scurrility. This was by Mr. Russen in his book entitled, *Fundamentals without a foundation; or a true picture of the Anabaptists*, in 1703. In this work he represents them as the most vile and offensive sect that ever appeared in the world. Not only holding dangerous errors, but men of the most vicious and profligate lives. After many stories of this nature, he adds, _And Benjamin Keach, another noted writer and teacher of theirs, has been lately accused as guilty of the same, this is, of uncleanness._

Soon after this book was published, three persons of good reputations, Mr. Thomas Carr, Mr. John Latter, and Mr. Samuel Newman, waited on Mr. Russen, to know the reason of his inserting this scandalous story.

Slander Repelled.

Mr. Russen at first solemnly denied the fact, but when they produced the book, and shewed him the words above mentioned, he endeavoured to excuse himself by saying it was so reported to him; and when urged to declare his author, he refused to do it. In the reply to Mr. Russen_s book published by Mr. Joseph Stennett, he was challenged to name the person, if he could, that ever accused Mr. Keach formerly or lately, of any such crime; but this he never complied with.

To remove all ground for any giving credit to this infamous libel, Mr. Stennett published a certificate as a Postscript to his work, which is as follows._ Though what has been said in the foregoing treatise, concerning the unreasonableness of Mr. R_s

suggestions against Mr. Keach, is I hope sufficient to satisfy any impartial man as to his reputation; yet some of his friends and neighbours, two of whom are members of Parliament, having given him the following testimony under their hands, I have thought it proper to insert it in this place.

_We whose names are underwritten (being neighbours and acquaintance of Mr. Benjamin Keach, and divers of us Paedobaptists, some of us in the communion of the church of England) having for many years known his good conversation as a christian, and as a minister, do solemnly declare and testify that we are entirely satisfied, that Mr. David Russen's assertion in his book, entitled, *Fundamentals without a foundation*, p 31. That the said Mr. Keach has been lately accused of uncleanness, is false, groundless and malicious; for we never before heard of any such accusation made against him by any person whatsoever, or that he was ever charged with the least immodesty; and we believe Mr. Russen might with as much justice have accused any other pious and modest man in the world.

Controversies

This we think ourselves in justice bound to declare, to prevent Mr. Keach's labours and books (several of which, even in Mr. Russen's opinion, deserve commendation, p 44) for being slighted or rendered useless to any. And we doubt not but Mr. Keach might have the testimony of a multitude of hands besides ours to what is above said. In witness of which we set our hands, Sep. 6, 1703.

RICHARD WILKINSON.

WILLIAM WILLMOTT.

JOSEPH COLLETT.

ROBERT CABELL

JOHN HOLLIS,

JOHN VALLEY.

CHARLES COX.

RICHARD NEWNHAM

JOSEPH WORLEY.

VALENTINE GLOVER.

BENJAMIN WYATT.

RICHARD RICHARDSON

THOMAS FOSTER.

EDWARD HINCHLIFFE

JOHN STANDARD.

JOHN CHOLMLEY

JOSHUA FARROW.

JOSEPH CHITTY

JOHN ROBERTS

THOMAS HOLLIS.

THOMAS MAYO.

WILLIAM LEADER.

GEORGE ONGLEY.

JOHN MOORE.

EDWARD FLEMING.

JOHN GOUGH.

ANTHONY QUARLES.

JOHN WEBB.

By these means the character of Mr. Keach so far from being injured shone the brighter, by having such a full and honorable testimony borne to his blameless conversation.

Mr. Keach took a considerable part also in some controversies amongst the Baptists, on subjects in which they were not agreed. Such as laying on of hands on baptized believers. The propriety of granting ministers a maintenance for their labours. Singing the praises of God in public worship. And the abrogation of the Seventh-day Sabbath.

Ministerial Maintenance

On the first of these, viz. *Laying on of hands*, Mr. Keach defended the practice, in a work entitled, *Darkness vanquished, being an answer to Danvers on laying on of hands*, 8vo. 1675. Mr. Keach and his church were so tenacious for this principle that they made it essential to communion, and none could be admitted to fellowship with them who did not submit to it. On the second, viz. *Granting ministers a maintenance*, that they might be taken off from secular employments and given up wholly to the ministry. The occasion for writing on this subject Crosby thus relates. _Even from the very beginning of the Baptist churches in England, several of their teachers had been tradesmen, and continued in their secular employments after they were ordained to the work of the ministry. In some places this was occasioned through necessity, the people being poor, and few in number, and exposed to many hardships by persecution, so that they were obliged to it for the support of themselves and families. But there were others who acted thus upon principle, thinking it a sin either for the people to give, or for the minister to receive or take any thing as a reward for his labour in the ministry, and grounded this opinion on a mistaken interpretation of those words in the Old Testament. *Mic. iii 11. The Priests teach for hire, and the prophets divine for money*; forgetting the words of the Saviour, *The labourer is worthy of his hire*. _

Mr. Keach published on this subject, at the request of the London ministers, and proved by many arguments that it was the duty of every congregation, if able, to support their minister. This treatise was recommended to all the churches of baptized believers in England and Wales, by many ministers, amongst whom were Mr. Hansard Knollys, Mr. William Kiffin, &c. In the Assembly, 1682, this work was particularly recommended by the whole body of ministers and messengers of 107 churches.

On Singing in public worship

The subject of singing the praises of God in the assembly for public worship was taken up by Mr. Keach in 1691, in a work entitled, *The Breach repaired in God's worship: or singing of Psalms, Hymns and spiritual songs proved to be a holy ordinance of Jesus Christ*. In the present day when this practice is universal, it will appear unaccountable that our forefathers should require arguments to prove the following particulars. Viz. What it is to sing. _ That there can be no proper singing without the voice. _ 'Tis not simple heart joy, or inward rejoicing without the voice. _ A metaphorical singing mentioned in scripture. _ No mental singing, as there is no mental praying. _ The Essence of singing no more in the heart or spirit than the Essence of preaching, &c. _ Singing is a musical melodious modulation, or turning of the voice, &c. &c. _ With a number other particulars equally curious, and to us self evident. Crosby says, _ Though he had very great success in this controversy, yet it brought upon him much trouble and ill will. When he was convinced that singing the praises of God was an holy ordinance of Jesus Christ, he laboured earnestly and with a great deal of prudence and caution, to convince his people thereof; and first obtained their consent to the practice of it at the conclusion of the sacrament of the Lord's supper, and had but two of the brethren in his church that opposed him therein. After his church had continued in this practice about six years, they further consented to practice the same on publick thanksgiving days, and continued therein about fourteen years; and then by a regular act of the church, in a solemn manner agreed, to sing the praises of God on every Lord's day, excepting about five or six persons that dissented thereof: and if I am not mistaken (adds Crosby) this was the first church that thus practiced this holy ordinance. But so far was Mr. Keach, or the church, from imposing on the consciences of those few that dissented (though the church then consisted of some hundreds) that they agreed to sing when prayer was concluded after the sermon; and if those few who were not satisfied could not stay the time of singing the praises of God an essential of communion, nor for the *being*, but for the comfort and *well-being* of a church. _

Occasion of a Separation.

We have been the more particular on this part of Mr. Keach's history, because the prejudices amongst his people against singing were general among the baptists, and the difficulty we apprehend to introduce it was found great in all our churches. Many of them about his time began the practice.

Though Mr. Keach called his book *the breach repaired*, and doubtless designed to be a *repairer of the breaches* which this subject had occasioned, it proved the cause of a separation in his church. The appeal Mr. Keach makes to his church in the *Epistle Dedicatory* to this work, does him great credit as a faithful and affectionate Pastor, we would willingly transcribe it, but for enlarging the Article too much. One expostulation we notice because it shews the zeal of these godly people. _ Hath not the church sung at breaking of bread always for 16 or 18 years last past, nor would omit it in the time of the late persecution: _ No doubt but their singing the praises of God had often been the scent to attract their persecutors. And as their Lord went from the supper to the garden, and

from thence to the cross, so they had often left the *Lord_s table* to appear at the Magistrate_s bar, and from thence to the Prison.

Church in Maze Pond

All his affectionate expostulations, however, did not prevail, for the discontent of those few who first opposed him increased, and at length drew others to unite with them, till they agreed to removed and found another church, upon the same principles, *singing only excepted*. This was the church in Maze Pond, over which the Rev. Mr. Dove is at present the pastor, which abode by this principle till after the death of Mr. Edward Wallin.

The piece on the Jewish Sabbath, which he published in 1700, was entitled, _The Jewish Sabbath abrogated: or the Saturday Sabbatarians confuted, in two parts, first proving the abrogation of the Old seventh-day Sabbath. _ Secondly; That the Lord_s day is of divine appointment. This was occasioned by some of his people embracing those sentiments, but the arguments he produced prevented their spread, so that but about three or four left him to unite with the Sabbatarians. He had the honour to present a copy of this work to the Archbishop of Canterbury (Dr. Tillotson) who highly approved of the performance, and received him into his favour and acquaintance by Mr. John Gosnold, pastor of the church in Barbican, for whom, it is said, the Archbishop had a great respect paid by Archbishop Tillotson to the Baptists probably arose from the circumstance of his father, who was _remarkable for a good understanding and so uncommon knowledge of the scriptures, _ being a Baptist. This was Mr. Robert Tillotson, a considerable clothier at Sowerby, in the parish of Halifax, Yorkshire.

Public Dispute

He embraced the sentiments of the Baptists when his son was very young, and this gave rise to the report that the Archbishop had never been baptized in Infancy, and led Dr. Birch to say in his sermon before the house of Commons, January 30, 1691, *We have fathers of the church who never were her sons*. To this the Archbishop alludes in a letter to Lady Russel, August 1, 1692. Speaking of King William he says, _If it please God to preserve my good master, and to grant him good success, I have nothing more to wish in this world, but that God would grant children to this excellent Prince of Wales._ (Birch_s life of Tillotson p 2, 3 298)

Mr. Keach was often engaged in public disputations; as once with the people called Quakers: at another time with Mr. Matthew Caffin of Horsham, and some others who had denied the divinity of Christ; and often with the Paedobaptists. He was once challenged by some ministers of the church of England, not far from London, to dispute on baptism at Gravesend. As he was going thither in a Gravesend boat in the company with others, there happened to be a clergyman in the boat with them. The conversation of Mr. Keach and his friends, led the clergyman to suspect that he was the person going to dispute with his brethren. He therefore attacked Mr. Keach while in the boat, and found what sort of defense of the Baptist_s sentiments would be made. When the boat arrived at Gravesend, it was supposed the Clergyman made his friends acquainted with the debate,

and advised them to decline the disputation, as Mr. Keach was obliged to return to London without seeing either of them. This circumstance is mentioned by Mr. Keach in the preface to his *Gold Refined* as occurring in the summer of 1688, consequently before the Revolution, and when he could not have engaged in it without danger.

Extraordinary Occurance

We were challenged (says he) to dispute the point with some ministers of the church of England not far from London; but though they had rendered us as odious as they well could (and as if we had nothing to say for our practice, viz. For baptizing men and women) yet when all came to all, none of them would appear to defend what they had spoken.

Notwithstanding the various labours in which Mr. Keach engaged he was of a very weak constitution and often afflicted. He was at one time so ill, in 1689, as to be given over by the Physicians, and several of the ministers and his relations had taken leave of him, as a dying man past all hopes of recovery. _But (says Crosby) the reverend Mr. Hansard Knollys seeing his dying friend and brother in the gospel near to all appearance expiring; betook himself to prayer, and in an earnest and very extraordinary manner, begged that God would spare him and add unto his days the time he granted to his servant Hezekiah. As soon as he had ended his prayer, he said, _Brother Keach, I shall be in heaven before you, _ and quickly after left him. So remarkable was the answer of God to this good man's prayer, that I cannot omit it. Though it may be discredited by some, there are yet living incontestible evidences of the fact. For Mr. Keach recovered of that illness and lived just fifteen years afterward; and then it please God to visit him with that short sickness which put an end to his life._

During this illness he had many friends with him, but the violence of his distemper soon deprived them of the expectation of his life.

His Illness and Death

When he was very near his end Mr. Joseph Stennett was sent for; but when he came Mr. Keach was not able to say much to him excepting desiring him to preach his funeral sermon from *1 Tim i, 12. I know in whom I have believed and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed to him against that day.* During his illness he manifested extraordinary patience and resignation to the divine will, and with much composure told his wife that he had recommended her to a better husband, the Lord Jesus Christ; and exhorted his children to live in love, peace, and unity, and in a stedfast adherence to Christ and his ways. A little before his death, his eldest daughter, who was one of the people called Quakers, came to see him, with whom he endeavoured to converse, and manifested a great eagerness and desire to speak with her, but his speech failing prevented him. He died July 18, 1704, about 11 o'clock in the morning, and in the 64th year of his age. On the following Friday his remains were taken from his meeting house at the corner of Stoney-lane, to the Baptists' burying ground in the Park Southwark. A very large auditory was collected to hear his funeral sermon, but the illness

of Mr. Stennett prevented him from preaching it, till some time afterwards. The sermon was not printed though he was strongly solicited to do it.

Mr. Keach had been twice married. His first wife was a Miss Jane Grove of Winslow in Buckinghamshire, _a woman of great piety and prudence,_ to which might have been added great affection and fortitude, which she manifested when her husband was set in the pillory, by standing by him and defending the cause for which he suffered. This good woman died October 1670, in the 31st year of her age. This was a very great affliction to him as she was a very tender and loving wife, and had been his companion in sufferings ten years.

Twice Married.

By her he had five children, three of whom, Mary, Elias, and Hannah, survived him. The extraordinary affection which he bore to her memory was manifested by his writing a poem on the occasion of her death, which he entitled, *A pillar set up, assigning as his reason the example of Jacob, And Rachel died and was buried, and Jacob set up a pillar on her grave, that is the pillar of Rachel's grave unto this day.* In this he gave her a very high character, commending her zeal for the truth, sincerity in religion, uncommon love to the saints, and her great contentment in whatsoever condition of life God was pleased to place her. He particularly mentions how great a help and comfort she was to him in his suffering for the cause of Christ, visiting him while in prison, and taking all possible care of him, and encouraging him to go on, counting it an honour done them both, in that they were called to suffer for the sake of Christ. She was of an heavenly conversation, her discourse savoury, and for the most part about spiritual things, seeking the good of those she talked with; and in this she was so successful that many have acknowledged that they were indebted to her conversation for their conversion to God. As Mr. Keach published this account of her that her example might be imitated by others, for the same reason we have thought it worth transcribing.

After being a widower about two years, he married Mrs. Susanna Partridge of Rickmansworth in Hertfordshire. She was of the family of the Skidmores in that county, and the widow of Mr. Samuel Partridge with whom she lived only nine months. This union was much to his comfort, as they lived together in great affection 32 years. Mrs. Keach survived her husband 23 years, and continued a widow till her death in February 1727.

Character of Mr. Keach

By this wife he had five daughters, viz, Elizabeth, Susanna, two named Rachel, and Rebekah. Crosby says, that she lived with him nearly twenty years of this time, and was of a most excellent christian character.

_To collect every particular transaction (says Crosby) of this worthy minister_s lifecannot be expected at such a distance of time; nay, even to collect all that was excellent and imitable in him is too great a task to be now undertaken. I shall only observe

that he was a person of great integrity of soul; a Nathaniel indeed; his conversation not frothy and vain, but serious without being morose or sullen. He began to be religious early and continued faithful to the last. He was not shocked by the fury of his persecutors, though he suffered so much from them for the cause of Christ. Preaching the gospel was the pleasure of his soul, and his heart was so engaged in the work of the ministry that from the time of his first appearing in public, to the end of his days, his life was one continued scene of labour and toil. His great study and constant preaching exhausted his animal spirits, and enfeebled his strength, yet to the last he discovered a becoming zeal against the errors of the day; his soul was too great to recede from any truth that he owned, either from the frowns or flatteries of the most eminent. He discharged the duties of his pastoral office with unwearied diligence, by preaching in season and out of season, visiting those under his charge, encouraging the serious, defending the great truths of the gospel, and setting them in the clearest light. How low would he stoop for the sake of peace! And how would he bear the infirmities of his weak brethren! That such as would not be wrought upon by the strength of reason, might be melted by his condescension and good nature. He was prudent as well as peaceable; would forgive and forget injuries, being charitable as well as courteous.

Character of Mr. Keach (cont)

He was not addicted to utter hard censures of such as differed from him in lesser matters, but had a love for all saints, and constantly exercised himself in this, to keep a conscience void of offences towards God and towards man. He shewed an unwearied endeavour to recover the decayed power of religion, for he lived what he preached, and it pleased God so to succeed his endeavours that I doubt not but some yet living may call him their Father whom he hath begotten through the gospel. He affected no unusual tones, nor indecent gestures in his preaching, his style was strong and masculine. He generally used notes especially in the latter part of his life; and if his sermons had not the embellishments of language, which some boast of, they had this peculiar advantage to be full of solid divinity; which is a much better character for pulpit discourses, than to say they are full of pompous eloquence and flights of wit. It was none of the least of his excellent qualifications for the ministerial work, that he *knew how to behave himself in the house of God* in regard of the exercise of that discipline which is so necessary to a christian society. With patience and meekness, with gravity and prudence, with impartiality and faithfulness, did he demean himself in his congregation; and with prudence and conduct did he manage all their affairs upon all occasions.

In his family he was very affectionate husband, a tender father, a prudent master, and a constant and grateful friend. He was naturally of a good disposition and generally pleasant and cheerful in conversation. The vivacity of his temper sometimes exposed him to sharp and sudden fits of anger, which occasioned no small uneasiness to himself, as well as those who had given him any provocation; but those fits were but for a short continuance, and so the trouble occasioned by them was soon over: and the goodness and tenderness of his nature was such as afterwards made amends to those who had fallen under his resentment. Besides, if his natural passion, at any time, so far transported him, as to cause him to speak any rash or offensive words, he was presently recovered; and

would with the greatest humility and frankness retract what he had said and thereby discovered that not the least degree of prejudice remained in his breast._ (_The books (says Crosby) which he published were many and some of them now very difficult to be met with.I think the following is a complete catalogue of them, and are evidence that he was no idle labourer in his Master_s vineyard)Thus far Crosby.

Mr. Keach was succeeded in the pastoral office by Mr. Benjamin Stinton, who died February 11, 1618.After his death the learned Dr. Gill was chosen pastor, but a separation took place in consequence, when one party went to Unicorn Yard and formed the church now under the care of Mr. Thomas Hutchings, and the other that in Carter Lane at present under the care of Dr. Rippon.

Crosby Vol. IV [395, says, speaking of Mr. William Arnold, _He was chosen and ordained pastor of the congregation which had before for their pastor the reverend Mr. Benjamin Stinton. The lease of this meeting-house being expired they removed to a small distance and built a new one. Unicorn-Yard upon Horsly-down, where they still reside, and are now [1640] under the pastoral care of Mr. Thomas Flower._

By this it seems they who opposed Dr. Gill had the meeting-house built for Mr. Keach at the end of Stony lane.Dr. Gill_s friends built Carter lane.

Works of Mr. Keach

His practical Works are:

1. The child_s instructor, or a new and easy primmer.The first piece he wrote and for which he suffered so much. 24mo. 1664.
2. A Summons to the grave: being Mr. John Norcot_s funeral sermon.12mo. 1676.
3. TROPOLOGIA.A key open scripture metaphors. 2 Vol Folio. 1682.N.B. A second Edition of this work was published by the London booksellers a few years since.
4. The travels of true godliness. 8vo.
5. The progress of sin: or the travels of ungodliness.8 vo.
6. The counterfeit christian: or the danger of hypocrisy. 4to 1691
7. The marrow of justification; being several sermons on Rom 4:5 4to 1692
8. The everlasting covenant; being a funeral sermon for Mr. Henry Forty. 8vo 1693.
9. A Trumpet blown in Zion. 4to.
10. A Golden Mine opened; or the glory of God_s rich grace displayed. 4to. 1694.
11. God acknowledged; being a sermon on particular fast. 4to. 1696.
12. The early seeker, and love of a dying Saviour.12mo. 1697.
13. The Articles of the faith of the congregation of Horsly-down. With the glory and discipline of a true church displayed. 12mo. 1697.
14. The display of glorious grace; or the covenant of grace opened, 8vo. 1698.
15. Jacob_s ladder improved. 8vo. 1698.
16. A call to weeping, or a warning concerning present miseries, 12mo. 168j9.
17. Instructions for children.24mo.
18. Gospel mysteries unveiled; or an exposition of all the parables, &c. Folio. 1704.

His Plemical Words

19. Mr. Baxter_s arguments for believer_s baptism.A Sheet 1674.
20. Darkness vanquished; being an answer to Dalvers on laying on of hands. 8vol 1675.
21. Gold refined; or baptism in its primitive purity. 8 vol 1689.
22. Light broke forth in Wales. 8vo.
23. The gospel ministers maintainance vindicated.12mo. 1689.
24. Antichrist stormed; or the popish church proved to be mystery Babylon. 8vo. 1689.
25. Paedobaptism; being an answer to the Athenian Society. 4to. 1691.
26. Breach repaired in God_s worship; or singing, &c.&c. 8vo.
27. A Sober reply to Mr. Steed_s epistle concerning singing. 8vo. 1691.
28. The rector rectified, &c. 8vo. 1692.
29. The Axe laid to the Root; or one blow more at the foundation of infants_ baptism, and church membership.Part 1. 4to. 1693.
30. The Axe laid to the Root; wherein Mr. Flavel_s , Mr. Rothwell_s and Mr. Exall_s arguments are answered.Part 11 4to. 1693.
31. A Counter Antidote; or an answer to Shute_s antidote to prevent the prevalency of Anabaptism. 4to. 1694.
32. A medium between two extremes, 8vo. 1698.
33. The Jewish Sabbath abrogated, &c. 8vo. 1700.
34. The French imposter detected; or an answer to Zachary Housell and Dr. Coward, who denied the Soul_s immortality. With a Frontispiece.12mo. 1702

His Poetical Works are,

35. Sion in distress, &c. 8vo. 1666.
36. A pillar set up to keep in remembrance his first dear and beloved wife.A Sheet.1679.
37. War with the Devil.8vo.
38. The glorious lover.8vo.
39. The grand impostor discovered; or, the Quaker_s doctrine weighed in the balance and found wanting.8vo. 1674.
40. The victorious Christian; or the triumph of faith, being prison meditations. A Sheet.1685.
41. Spiritual melody; containing nearly 300 hymns.12mo. 1696.
42. A Feast of fat things; containing several scripture songs and hymns.12mo. 1696.

_Besides which (adds Crosby) he had prefixed several prefaces and commendations to the works of others, viz.

A Preface recommendatory to Mr. Balmford_s poem, entitled, *The Seaman_s spiritual companion*. 8vo. 1678.

A Preface to Mr. Prudom_s unveiled by scripture light. 8vo. 1699.

A Preface to Mr. Prudom_s new world discovered; in which Mr. Keach declares his opinion of the Millenium.12mo. 1704.

An introduction to Mr. Coleman's narrative of a schism made in the church at Kilbey in Leicestershire.

Some of the works of Mr. Keach display a good share of learning, but this was supplied by others. The preface to his *Tropologia; or a Key to open scripture metaphors*, was written by the famous Thomas Delanue and bears his signature T.D. Nor did Mr. Keach wish to appear in borrowed plumes, since he acknowledges in the preface to the Rector Rectified as follows. _Whereas you will find both Hebrew, Greek, Latin, German Dutch (as well as English) made use of (either more or less) in the ensuing answer, I would not have you think I understand all these languages,; but I have had the assistance of a learned person (though in that case only) who is my friend and acquaintance, that so the work may be more fully and effectually done._

The piece, No. 22. *Light broke forth in Wales*: was written at the request of some Baptists in the Principality, in reply to a work published by Mr. James Owen of Oswestry, entitled, *Infant baptism from heaven*. As this was published in Welch, and was the first book written on the subject in that language. To this Mr. Owen never replied.

In 1739 a proposal was issued by Crosby at the close of his second Volume to print by subscription the works of Mr. Keach on the Mataphors and Parables; but this does not appear to have met the approbation of the public, for in 1740 at the beginning of the IV Volume, other proposals were made to publish in addition to these, his practical works making the whole III Volumes folio. Viz. No. 10,6,7,8,14,15,13. It does not appear that these were published.

Bell Alley, Coleman Street

This was one of the first seven churches, and if we may credit Bailie, a Scotch Presbyterian of that period, _this congregation was by far the largest and most fruitful of either of them._ There were several ministers belonging to it of whom we have some information.

Thomas Lamb. There are several circumstances mentioned of this zealous and courageous minister in our first Volume, p 176. A minister of this name was appointed Vicar of South Benfleet in Essex, July 23, 1641, but it does not appear how long he held the benefice. It is probable this may have been the same person, as Mr. Lamb was brought from Colchester in that county by order of Land on account of his nonconformity soon after this time. He appears to have distinguished himself as a disputant during that age of spiritual pugilism. We find him engaged in a public debate January 11, 1643, at Tarling in Essex on the subject of baptism, with Mr. John Stalham, Mr. Newton, and Mr. Gray.

Thomas Lamb

Edwards in his *Gangraena* has given an account of a disputation in which Mr. Lamb was engaged at the Spital on the day of public thanksgiving for the taking of Dartmouth by the Parliament's forces. There is no doubt but this story has received a colouring from the blackening pen of Edwards who could not speak peaceably and immateriality of the human soul. The lord mayor having private notice of the meeting, sent his officers to prevent it. On Mr. Lamb being informed of it he said, he would acquaint his brethren that the lord major had sent to forbid their meeting, or rather to request them not to dispute on that day. The debate it appears proceeded upon the question, *That God made man, and every part of man of the dust of the earth; and therefore man and every part of man would turn to the dust again.* Edwards says that Mr. Lamb could not refute this proposition, till at length one stood up and requested him to leave the point to the consideration of the brethren, and so after four or five hours confusion they sat down and rested. (*Gangraena*, Part II p 14, 15.)

Notwithstanding the virulent manner in which Edwards has mentioned Mr. Lamb, we may gather from his account that he was extensively useful. Many, says he, use to resort to this church and meeting, the house and yards full, especially young youths and wenches come thither. Lamb preaches sometimes (when he can get into pulpits) in our churches. On the 5th of November, 1614, he preached at Gracechurch Street, in London, where he had a mighty great audience, and preached universal grace, the Arminian tenets.

Mr. Lamb's Labours

This Lamb, with one Oats, and others of that church, use to travel up and down the country, to preach their corrupt doctrines, and to dip. He preached at Gilford in his way to Portsmouth. An Essex minister told me that Lamb, and one Tomlins, with others, were travelling in Essex to do the Devil's work, and that these men were sent down from the church as a church act, into the county of Essex to make disciples, and propagate their way; and indeed into most counties of England, where these men can go with safety, some emissaries out of the sectaries' churches are sent to infect and poison the counties. (*Gangraena*, Part 1 p33)

All this from the pen of a bitter Presbyterian, who was desirous of seeing the Presbyterian discipline established, and all the sectaries exterminated, is perfectly intelligible. The fact appears to be that many of the Baptist ministers were very zealous in propagating their views of the gospel, and their principal crime, perhaps, was that some of the members of the National church united themselves with those societies which were formed upon the plan of congregational discipline.

Mr. Lamb lived till after the restoration, and we find his name signed to the declaration against Venner's rebellion. Crosby says he died about the year 1672. It is probable he continued preaching at Bell Alley till he finished his course.

He is charged by Edwards with preaching the Arminian tenets of universal grace, and Baillie says that he preached both Arminianism and Antinomianism.(Baillie_s *Anabap* p. 94, 95.)These charges, however, are satisfactorily refuted by the titles of some of his works preserved by Crosby..

John Batty.

viz 1.Absolute freedom in sin by Christ_s death for the world, as the object of faith in opposition to conditional set forth by Mr. John Goodwin, in his book entitled, _Redemption Redeemed, and the final perseverance of the saints proceeding from election, by the grace of God alone maintained, and sweetly reconciled with the aforesaid doctrine.And the great question of God_s eternal decree of reprobating the unbelieving world cleared from the odium cast upon it by Mr. Goodwin._This was printed in 1656 in Quarto, and dedicated to the Lord Protector2. _The fountain of free tending to disprove particular predestination: the second to shew the contradiction betwixt Christ_s dying for all, and God_s election of some; the third to prove that the soul doth not come from the parent, and consequently that there is no original sin._ Quarto.1642.

John Batty.He appears to have been an Assistant to Mr. Thomas Lamb.He is mentioned by Edwards as engaged in the public dispute at the Spital, and if he really said what he is charged with, which is very unlikely, it is not to his credit that he should treat the magistrate with disrespect.According to Edwards he said, _That Mr. Mayor was a limb of antichrist, and a persecutor of the brethren; and he questioned what power and authority he had to forbid them; he was sure the parliament gave him no such power, but gave them liberty to use their consciences; and for his part he durst undertake to make it good to Master Mayor, calling my Lord Mayor,_ says Edwards, _in a most base and shameful manner, Master Mayor._

Mr. Batty was engaged with Mr. Lamb also in the dispute at Tarling, and he appears to have been an active itinerant preacher.His name is signed to the declaration against Venner_s rebellion in 1660.We have no account of him after this period.

Mr. Samuel Oates mentioned another place was a minister of this church.We have no account of Mr. Lamb_s successor.In 1705 the church had dissolved itself, how much sooner we have no information. (Wilson_s *Histo. Of Diss.* Vol. 11 p 443.)

Church in Bishopsgate Street

This church was founded 1641, and has been mentioned in another part of our work. (Vol I p 162)

Edward Barber. This person published a work on baptism in 1641, and was imprisoned for eleven months on that account. He must therefore have been one of the first baptist pastors who suffered for these principles. Edwards tells a curious story of this church which we give for the amusement of the reader. _I have been informed for certain, and that upon a second enquiry after the truth of it, that on the 12th of November last, (1640) there met a matter of eighty Anabaptists (many of them belonging to the church of one *Barber*). In a great house in Bishopsgate street, and had a love-feast, where five new members lately dipped were present; the manner of this meeting was as follows, taken from the relation of one of their members who was at it. When the company was met together they began with prayer; after prayer every one of the company kneeled down apart; and *Barber*, with another of their way, went to each of them, one after another, and laid both their hands upon every particular head, women as well as men and either in a way of prayer, prayed they might receive the Holy Ghost; or else barely to every one of them used these words, *Receive the Holy Ghost*; after these words they set down to supper which was dressed for them by a cook! When supper was ended before the cloth was taken away, they administered the Lord's supper. After the receiving of that, in the close a question was propounded, *Whether Christ died for all men or no?* which they fell into dispute of; and being late eleven of the clock of night, and the party who related it having a great way home, left the company hot at this disputation; the party who related this was somewhat troubled at this new business of laying on of hands there, as not well knowing the meaning of it; but upon enquiry the party relates so far as could be learned upon asking some other of the members; the meaning is this, That such persons who now after the laying on of hands shall have gifts, must be sent to preach into the countries, yea, into the street, openly and publicly, yea to the doors of the Parliament houses; and the fore-named party said, the like had been done in another church of the Anabaptists before; and added they agreed to forbear a while from sending them into the streets publicly and to the Parliament to preach till they see how things would go._

He appears to have been the minister of this church till the year 1674 (Crosby Vol IV p 45) and was succeeded by _

Jonathan Jennings

Jonathan Jennings. This worthy minister succeeded to the pastoral office of this _ancient congregation_ as it is termed by Crosby in 1674. (Crosby Vol I p 404) and the next year we find his name signed with those of the Particular baptist ministers in London to the reply to the Quaker's appeal respecting Thomas Hicks. He is said to have been a very able preacher, and a great sufferer for his nonconformity. His different imprisonments of this account amounted to twelve years. One instance of the persecution he met with is thus related by Crosby. _When preaching on a Lord's day between morning and afternoon sermon, at Mr. Loveday's meeting house, in Looking glass Alley, East Smithfield, the officers came, and set a guard at each door; Mr. Jennings escaping in the crowd, they greatly abused the people, striking them with their staves, took the names of several, and carried about *seventy* before Justice Smith of Stepney, about *fifty* of them made it up with the officers and informers, and the rest were committed to New Prison where they were used so barbarously, that some of them died there, being crowded

together, and made to lie upon the ground. This did not suffice; they removed the *felons* out of a nasty hole, and put them therein, till at length, they were obliged to pay three pounds a week for two rooms, and liberty to have their own beds. Thus they continued prisoners near four months and in the end were fined ten marks. _This is a specimen of what the Baptists, and other Dissenters suffered after the restoration of Monarchy, and there-establishment of Episcopacy. It was true of England at this period. _*Judgement is turned away backward, and justice standeth afar off; for truth is fallen in the street, and equity cannot enter. Yea truth faileth; and he that departeth from evil maketh himself a prey: and the Lord saw it, and it displeased him that there was no judgement.* It is probable Mr. Jennings died toward the end of this century; soon after which time the congregation met in White_s Alley Moorfields, perhaps much earlier, as there was a meeting-house there before the revolution. This church did not unite with the London churches in the general Assembly, which we apprehend was the case with many of the particular baptist churches.

Abraham Mulliner

Joseph Taylor. It is painful to write the account of any person whose records are blotted by impurity. Crosby dismisses the history of Mr. Taylor by saying, _He had the oversight of this church a small time, his conversation being irregular they excluded him. _This however is an honorable testimonial to the regard manifested by the church to purity of discipline, and consistency of conduct.

Abraham Mulliner. Crosby stiles him _an old disciple of Christ, _ and writes his history with much affectionate respect. He was born in 1671, and appears to have been devoted to God from his youth. When he was 21 years of age he was baptized upon a profession of faith and united with this church. After being a member about eight years, on the exclusion of Mr. Taylor, he was called to the pastoral office by his brethren. Crosby says, _When he entered upon his ministerial services he made it his care to execute them well; it was the chief, the most constant, and the most laborious part of his life, in which he ceased not, for the space of about *forty* years, to watch for the welfare of men_s souls and warn them with many tears. He laid no schemes of raising his worldly fortune, to live at ease in wealth and greatness, but left these things to God's disposal, without concerning himself about them; but his chief thoughts, designs, and contrivances were how he might secure his own soul and the souls of others, in the love, and interest of God and heaven.

Abraham Mulliner

To this end he endeavoured, by the grace of God, to do all things principally for his sake, and to his glory. His words from the pulpit, and in conversation, as becoming a minister of Christ, were grave, sober, and generally tending to the improvement of virtue and piety. He practiced himself what he persuaded others to; and none who ever had the benefit of his pious conversation but must be exceedingly affected therewith, unless they were endued with hearts as hard as stone. The poor were his continual concern; to the very utmost of his circumstances he did abound in all the acts of charity towards them; they

found a welcome at his house within, not at the door; and often publicly exhorted his hearers, from the pulpit, that labouring they ought to support their necessities, remembering that Christ himself said, *It is more blessed to give than to receive*. It pleased God to bless his labours with numerous additions to his church. The great love he had to them, and the delight he took in serving them words are wanting to express. In his dying moments he declared to the Rev. Samuel Fry (pastor of the congregation in Fair Street upon Horsly-down) who visited him, that his heart was in his work, and that his soul breathed after the welfare of his people. Such was the sublimity of the frame of his spirit, that frequently in health, as well as in his last sickness, he used to say, he longed to go home and join the church triumphant above. He was a man of exceeding moderation, was much grieved at those cavils which too much affected christians of differing sentiments, believing that though *the gate is strait, and the way narrow, that leadeth to eternal life*, yet the same is made more so, by the contention of christians one among another for meer trifles and things not necessary, though fit to be known. As his last illness was long and tedious, so it pleased God to afford him great support and comfort of mind therein. He declared to his friends that since his restraint from public services he had set himself solemnly to examine his evidences for heaven and a future happiness, and thanked God he was not afraid to die. He continued joyful in his soul to the end. The calmness and serenity, peace and comfort of his mind, held till he fell asleep in Jesus, quietly resigning his soul to God, May 31, 1789, in the 68th year of his age. He was interred in the burying ground at *Bunhill-fields*, June the 7th, ensuing, attended with a numerous (Crosby Vol p 404.) company of mournful spectators._

We find Mr., Mulliner's name mentioned in a work printed in 1709, entitled, *The Mystery of Anabaptism unmasked*, &c. dedicated to the Bishop of London. By Marius D'Assigny, B.D. This gentleman (for so he calls himself) gives the Names and Trades of some of the anabaptists, Principal Teachers, and their meetings. Of Mr. Mulliner he says, *A Taylor, in White's Alley, Moorfields*. After enumerating twenty seven, he adds, *These and such like persons are the leaders of this sect of the Anabaptists, and by these we may judge of the rest. There are a great number of them about London, but their names and meeting houses I cannot yet learn.*_

Mr. Mulliner is spoken of in another part of the above mentioned work among those general Baptists who opposed the errors of Mr. Matthew Caffin; from this it is probable the congregation in his time belonged to that denomination.

We have no account of the successor of Mr. Mulliner. The meeting-house was standing in 1789.

Church in Petty France

The congregation meeting at this place, which was situated between Bishopsgate Street and Moorfields, was among the most early of the baptist denomination, though we have no information of its ministers till after the restoration. The first distinct mention of this church is in 1662, when the meeting was disturbed and the minister carried to Newgate. In a pamphlet published in that year, entitled, *Behold a Cry; or a true relation*

of the inhuman and violent outrages of divers Soldiers, Constables and others, practiced upon many of the Lord_s people, commonly, though falsely called Anabaptists, at their several meetings in and about London, we find the following statement, _On the 15th of June 1662 the soldiers came with great fury and rage with their swords drawn to a meeting at *Petty-France*, when they very inhumanly wounded a boy almost to death; it was doubtful whether he would recover. They took away him that preached, and carried him to Newgate, and never had him before any Magistrate, where he remained till Sessions, and from thence was removed to Newgate again, where he yet remains. On the 29th of June soldiers came to *Petty-France*, full of rage and violence, with their swords drawn. They wounded some and struck others, broke down the gallery and made much spoil._ (Crosby Vol II, p 276)

This church shared also in the persecutions of the next reign. In 1683 they were deprived of their meeting-house, but it seems they afterwards returned to it, as we find it mentioned in the account of the general Assemblies in London. We have some information of three ministers of this congregation who were eminent in their day and of whom we proceed to give an account.

William Collins.

William Collins. He was ordained joint elder of this church with Dr. Nehemiah Coxe, July 21, 1673. Their names appear to an excellent letter, addressed to the Rev. Andrew Gifford of Bristol, proving it to be the duty of unconverted men to pray, in 1675. Also a letter inviting the churches in England and Wales to send their ministers to London for the purpose of consulting on some important subjects connected with the prosperity and respectability of the denomination. This was in the same year. He bore a very conspicuous part in the meetings of the general Assembly, and was requested to draw up a catechism for the use of children and servants. It is probable therefore that the Baptist Catechism was compiled by Mr. Collins, though it has by some means or other been called Keach_s Catechism. He continued his useful ministry in this church till his death, the 30th of October 1702, and his funeral sermon was preached by Mr. John Piggott the 15th of November following from Job 14:14. It was afterwards printed and dedicated _to the Church of Christ lately under the pastoral care of the deceased Mr. William Collins._ The character of this excellent minister of Christ is so well drawn by Mr. Piggott that we give it in his own language.

Character of Mr. Collins.

_I must confess I am no friend to the flatteries that are too commonly used in funeral discourses: nor am I an enemy to the just commendations of such as die in the Lord: whose extraordinary worth may give occasion for it, and be very instructive to those that survive. So that in charity to the living, and in justice to the dead, I shall now attempt to say something of that learned and judicious minister of Christ, Mr. William Collins, whom God has suddenly removed from the midst of us.

_I design not a history of his life, nor am I capable to delineate the several branches of his character; yet something I would say, that may give you an idea, though it be not so perfect a one as I could wish, of this great man.

__Twas early that he discovered an inclination to study and books, and his progress in learning was swift and sure. When he had passed through learning, and had had the approbation of one of the most severe critics of this age, (Dr. Bushby) he began to travel; and, if I mistake not, before that time, God had made him sensible of sin, and drawn him to his Son. When he came abroad, not going so far as he at first designed, he remained a considerable time in France and Italy; where he finished the course of his other studies preparatory to that of Theology, to which he closely applied himself upon his return to England.

_I shall not mention the encouraging offers he had to join with the National Church, which he judiciously refused; for it was conscience, not humour, that made him a Dissenter.

_I need not say how well he was prepared for the study of divinity by nature, learning, and grace, for his proficiency therein soon appeared; and after he had passed a little time preaching in the country, he had a very remarkable call by this church: for the very day he received the letter that invited him to London, he had solemnly kept by himself in fasting and prayer, for direction about disposing of himself for the constant exercise of his ministry; and receiving this in the close of that very day, he looked on it as an answer of prayer, and therefore consented to make you a visit; which having done, and this church having had sufficient proof of his real piety, as well as of his gifts and abilities, you gave him a unanimous call to the pastoral office. And how well he rose up to the qualifications of an evangelical Bishop or Elder, as recited by the apostle Paul, you of this Church know; and I believe will own, *That he was blameless as the Steward of God, not self-willed, not soon angry, nor given to wine, no striker, not given to filthy lucre; but a lover of hospitality, a lover of good men, sober, just, holy, temperate; holding fast the faithful word as he had been taught, being able, by sound doctrine, both to exhort and convince gainsayers.* He was apt to teach, and able, upon a sudden, to bring forth something proper for the use of edifying, out of that excellent stock of divine knowledge that he had treasured up; having more than once, when disappointed of that help he expected, gone into the pulpit, and preached an excellent sermon, in the opinion of competent judges. Yet though he was thus qualified, he did not serve God nor you with that which cost him nought, but applied himself to close study for every sermon, when his health would admit.

Character of Mr. Collins(cont)

_The subjects he ordinarily insisted on in the course of his ministry, were the great and important truths of the gospel, which he handled with great judgement and clearness. How would he open the miseries of the fall! And in how moving a manner would he discourse of the excellency of Christ, and the virtues of his blood, and his willingness to save poor awakened burdened sinners!

_How well did he distinguish betwixt justification and sanctification, exalting the imputed righteousness of Christ, without undervaluing the work of the Spirit! So that his sermons were useful under the influence of divine grace, to convert and edify, to enlighten and establish, being drawn from the fountain of truth, the sacred Scriptures, with which he constantly conversed in their original languages, having read the best critics, antient and modern; so that men of the greatest penetration might learn from his pulpit discourses, as well as those of the meanest capacity.

He did not affect a flaunting swelling stile, but always spoke what was strong and manly, becoming the weight of those truths he delivered. He did not study to amuse, but instruct his bearers; not so much regarding what would please as profit them, always having on his mind a sense of the worth of souls; and therefore he constantly advised his brethren of the ministry to take the greatest care they could to help forward the salvation of sinners to exalt Christ, and not preach themselves.

He had a rich stock of experience as well as of useful knowledge; he felt what he preached, and lived on that food he imparted to others. I do not mention his skill in physick, which he had well studied, as being no branch of his character as a divine. Yet under all these excellent attainments, he was one of the most modest humble men that ever I conversed with. How did this grace make him shine! Which is one of the brightest ornaments of the christian life.

Character of Mr. Collins (cont)

_How low would he stoop for peace! And how would he bear with the infirmities of his weak brethren! That such as would not be wrought upon by the strength of reason might be melted by his condescension and good nature. He was prudent as well as peaceable, charitable as well as courteous; one that could forgive and forget injuries, one that was above resenting the affronts that some men love to offer to persons of his character. He was not addicted to utter hard censures of such as differed from his in lesser matters, but had a love for all saints, and constantly exercised himself in this, *To keep a conscience void of offence towards God and towards man.* He was a person of unaffected steady piety, free from the wild *raptures* of enthusiasm, and the dull *formalities* of superstition. When he was not discoursing of profitable things, he generally employed himself in meditation; for ordinarily when he left his studies and came abroad, in the after part of the day, he usually fixed on some text of scripture for the subject of his meditation as he passed the streets; so that he had a constant savour of divine things of his spirit; and like the wise man spoken of in the book of Proverbs *His lips did disperse knowledge.* He was very communicative, and ready to inform those he conversed with. And I must ever own, to the honour of his memory, that he acted towards me, not only like a *friend* but a *father*, both in directing and encouraging me in my studies. He had often cleared up that to my understanding, which before was perplexed and obscure. He has prayed with me, and comforted me; but he is absent: O! how do I miss my guide and my friend? And do not you, my brethren? I am sure you do. What is the Lord a doing! What removes has he made! How can we forbear to cry out, *O the chariots of Israel, and the horsemen thereof!*

As for you that were under his care, you lay near his heart; and how greatly he longed for you all in the bowels of Christ, I am his witness: I, did I say? The God in whose presence I stand, and at whose bar I must shortly appear is his witness. I speak this with so great solemnity, because he mentioned it to me with such affection and tears, and told me how glad he would have been to have seen you settled with a judicious learned minister before he died; but God saw meet to remove him before this desirable thing was accomplished. (From this it appears Mr. Fox had died before him.)

_Indeed he was not apprehensive of his death in the time of his last illness, but had some kind of hope that he should have recovered. Yet I cannot but look on it as a remarkable providence, that he should be directed in the course of his ministry to fix on those words, Then saith he unto his disciples, The harvest truly is plenteous, but the labourers are few; pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth labourers into his harvest: and that the last sermon he ever preached should be from them; I pray God it may have a due effect upon all that heard it, for you will hear him no more. But from the last of his appearance in the pulpit, I am presently brought to his sick-bed.

_As he was constantly calm in his mind in the time of his health, so he was during his last sickness. Upon the first visit that I made him, I enquired how things were betwixt God and his soul. He told me, That he blessed God all was well. And all along he was very easy with respect to life or death; he had for a great while sat so loose to this world that he had no such desires of life as should embitter his death, or such fears of death as should render his life uncomfortable. For when a minister, with whom he was very intimate, took notice of his weakness, and apprehending him in danger, said to him, Sir, I hope you are not afraid to die: he answered, with great presence of mind, and a cheerful countenance, I bless God I have not been afraid to die this forty years. My brethren, some men may talk high, and look big when they are in health; but for a man to speak thus in the view of eternity, seems to argue not only great strength of faith, but a bright and unclouded assurance of the divine love.

He was, during his illness, much inclined to sleep; so that he seldom spoke unless he was pressed to it. We were sometimes ready to flatter ourselves with the expectation of his recovery, but a few days put an end to our hopes, and his valuable life. He was a servant to the prince of peace: he preached a gospel of peace, and he had a peaceful death, Mark the perfect, behold the upright, for the end of that man is peace. I know to mention his death, is like striking a dagger to some of your hearts, and I confess it has almost put a period to my discourse. I will not say what I feel myself, and with what a struggle I speak to you; it would be an ease could I stop here, and mingle my sighs and tears with yours. But, my brethren, let us abate our sorrows, because the soul of our deceased friend is happy in heaven, and his memory shall be blessed upon earth, Whose praise is in all the churches of Christ. (Crosby's Hist. Vol IV p 263. Piggot's sermons p 278-285.)

Nehemiah Cox, D.D.

Nehemiah Coxe, D.D. It is supposed that this eminent man was the son of Mr. Benjamin Coxe mentioned in our history of the Bedfordshire churches. This will account for his extraordinary learning notwithstanding the low station in Society he occupied at one period of his life. Dr. Coxe is frequently noticed in the records of the church at Bedford. He was admitted a member the 3rd of May 1669, and was one of those persons called to the ministry with the celebrated John Bunyan. From these records we find that in April 1673 he received a call to take the pastoral office of the church at Hitchin. The next year he was guilty of some misconduct for which he was censured by the church at Bedford. The following extract, while it perpetuates his misconduct, is also a record of his christian temper. 7th of the 3rd month (May) 1674. At Cotton-End, Brother Coxe did publicly make an acknowledgment of several miscarriages by him committed, and declared his repentance for the same as follows. _Whereas several works and practices have been uttered and performed by me, that might justly be censured to have a tendency to make tents and divisions in the congregation, I do declare myself unfeignedly sorry and repentant for the same. _It appears that Mr. Coxe soon after settled at Cranfield, and while here was persecuted for his opinions. The following curious statement in an old hand writing is in a copy of his _Discourse of the Covenants_ belonging to Mr. Sutcliffe of Olney, _The author lived at Cranfield a Cordwinder. He was imprisoned for preaching the gospel. On his trial at the assize at Bedford he first pleaded in Greek, and then answering in Hebrew, upon which the Judge called for the indictment and reading N. Coxe, Cordwinder, he wondered, and declared that none could answer him. Mr. Coxe insisted on his right to plead in that language, which was granted and he was dismissed. _Mr. Sutcliffe says, he has various times heard the above anecdote repeated in conversation in the town and neighbourhood of Bedford, and particularly with this addition, that the Judge should say to the counsellors, _Well the cordwinder has wound you all up gentlemen. _From Cranfield Mr. Coxe removed to London as we have noticed in the former article, where he was ordained joint-elder with Mr. Collins in 1675.

Dr. Nehemiah Coxe.

In 1681 Mr. Coxe published his treatise entitled, *A Discourse of the Covenants that God made with Men before the Law; wherein the covenant of circumcision is more largely handled, and the Invalidity of the Plea for Paedobaptism taken from thence discovered.* This was occasioned by Mr. Whiston's Treatises on the subject of Baptism, especially that entitled, *Infant-baptism plainly proved*, written against the celebrated Thomas Delaune. It appears from the preface that he had prepared materials to publish also on _the Covenant made with Israel in the Wilderness; and the state of the Church under the Law. _He was, however, _happily prevented, _he says, by Dr. Owen's 2 Vol. upon the Hebrews being published, to which he referred his reader for satisfaction, adding, _which he will there find answerable to what might be expected from so great and learned a person. _

We extract a paragraph from the preface to give an idea of the principles and spirit of Mr. Coxe. _That the publication of this little Tract, has been so long delayed, was partly occasioned by those perplexities which the restless plots of the Papists, and the bold attempts to overwhelm us with the worst of miseries, have caused, which I thought

would scarcely give leisure for the consideration of what might be offered in this kind; and partly by my own aversion from anything that looks like controverſie with thoſe that love the Lord Jeſus and ſincerely eſpouſe the Proteſtant Inter-eſt, though differing in Principle and Practice from me in ſome controverted points: there being nothing that my ſoul more longs for on earth than to ſee an intire and hearty *union* of all that fear God, and *hold the Head*, however differing in their ſentiments about ſome things of *leſſer moment*; and together with theſe things a ſenſe of inſufficiency to perform my undertaking with that advantage to truth as is to be deſired, had its ſhare: howbeit, after I had weighed all circumſtances, the ſatisfaction I have that no man is by me provoked by any undecent reflections, or any occaſion given to uncharitable and unchriſtian contention; with the hope that what is here offered may inform ſome, and give other occaſion of more accurate thoughts in a farther diſquiſition of the truths pointed at, prevailed with me at length to caſt in this my mite into the public treaſury._

When King James publiſhed his declaration of Indulgence in 1687, Mr. Coxe was one of the miniſters who preſented an Addreſs to the King upon the ſubject. See Vol. I p 469. In this inſtance he was certainly impoſed on, and unintentionally without doubt was made a tool to carry the _reſtleſs plots of the papists_ into effect. Beſides the piece above mentioned he printed a ſermon preached at the ordination of an *elder* and deacons in a baptized congregation in London. He was one of the miniſters who engaged in the ordination of Mr. Andrew Gifford, Briſtol; with whom he appears to have been very intimate. We have ſeen a MS. Letter to him written by Mr. Coxe on the ſubject of public ſinging, for which Mr. Coxe was an advocate. We have not been able to aſcertain from whence he obtained his Diploma, but the authority reſts on a note in Mr. Piggott's Volume of Sermons, p 190. Mr. Piggott calls him _a very excellent, learned, and judicious Divine._ A ſtill higher testimony is borne to his character by Dr. De Veil, in his annotations on Acts 2:41. He ſays, _which that great Divine, eminent for all manner of learning, Nehemiah Coxe, by moſt weighty and ſolid arguments, has demonſtrated in his excellent Diſcourſe of the Covenants God made with men before the Law.

Thomas Harrison

Thomas Harrison. At the death of Mr. Coxe he was choſen aſſiſtant to Mr. Collins. His father we conclude was Mr. Edward Harrison, who is frequently mentioned in our firſt Volume, and who it appears had been a miniſter of the eſtabliſhed church, but left it on accounts of not approving the baptizing of infants. (See Vol I p 294) Crosby ſays he was an Elder of a baptiſt church, and we find his name ſigned to the third Edition of the Confession of Faith of the ſeven churches in London. We have not aſcertain-ed where the church aſſembled, but he was one of the paſtors who united in the Circular letter to the churches in Wales in 1653. (Ibid p 253) After the revolution when the general Aſſembly propoſed to raiſe a _Fund_ for the uſe of the Baptiſt denomination; the money from the country was _to be remitted_ to Mr. Edward Harrison, living at the ſign of the Hen and Chickens, Cheaſide. (Ibid p 478) Mr. Thomas Harrison was born about 1667, and when twelve years of age joined the church in Petty-france. From this circumſtance it is probable his father was the miniſter of that congregation, and may have reſigned before the ordination of Mr. Collins and Mr. Coxe in 1675. It is ſaid that the early years of

Mr. Thomas Harrison were devoted to religion. His parents designed him for a secular employment, but were induce to alter their purpose in consequence of the eager desire he discovered for intellectual knowledge. Accordingly at a proper age, he was placed under the care of the Rev. Thomas Rowe with whom he went through a course of studies for the christian ministry. His excellent qualifications being discovered by the church of which he was a member, he received a regular call to the work of the ministry in the month of June 1689, and shortly after was chosen assistant to his pastor. In this connexion his name appears in lthe account of the general Assembly in 1692. Mr. Harrison continued a pastor of this church about ten years, and in 1699 accepted an invitation to become the pastor of a newly-formed church at Loriner_s Hall. His useful course, however, was soon terminated by death on the 14th of August 1702, when about 35 years of age. His initmate friend, Mr. John Piggott, preached a funeral sermon for him.; From this we extract the description given of his character, and of his triumphant and happy end.

_In his blooming youth he discovered an extraordinary relish of divine things, and his thirst after solid knowledge was such, that he could not stoop to the trifles of trade (for which he was designed) but his capacious soul aspired after something higher. And so soon as he obtained full liberty for study, he made a considerable proficiency in useful learning, being trained up under a learned (Mr. Thomas Rowe) tutor now alive; as he before had had the advice, conversation, and advantage of sitting under the ministry of two excellent and judicious divines, (Dr. Nehemiah Cox, and Mr. William Collins) joint pastors of that church to which he stood related for above twenty years.

_When he had a due call to preach in public (for he did not run before he was sent) he soon discovered his excellent qualifications for the ministerial work: for as he had entertained very clear and sound notions concerning the fundamental articles of our holy religion; so the several graces that adorn the christian life did shine with an admirable lustre through his whole conduct. His life in every instance was agreeable to his profession. He was not a trifling, airy professor, but a solid substantial christian; one that was able to speak to cases of conscience from his own experience, as well as from the books of casuits.

Thomas Harrison (cont.

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_He had laid in so good a fund of useful knowledge, and so read and studied divinity, that upon the proposing of a question he would immediately speak to it with great penetration and accuracy, yet not without a becoming deference to those that

exceeded him in years; though he would abide by the notions he had espoused, till the evidence of reason obliged him to quit them.

_He was a person of great integrity of soul, a Nathanael indeed, one that could be facetious in conversation without being forthy and vain, and serious without being morose and sullen.

_He kept himself (through the grace of God) unspotted from the world: *he kept innocence, and took heed to the thing that was right.* And so great a concern had he for the honour of his holy profession, that he would deny himself in things innocent in their own nature, rather than scandalize the weak, or lay a stumbling-block before the openly profane. He was a careful observer of the apostolic injunction, *To abstain from even the appearance of evil.* And one thing I have often remarked concerning him (which I believe all that knew him will confess) he was a very religious observer of his word, his promises were as sure and sacred as an oath.

_He was in every relation desirable and praise-worthy, *a dutiful son, a tender affectionate husband, a kind father, a prudent master, a true and lasting friend, and a faithful laborious minister.* But it is the last of these I am more eminently concerned to speak of at this time; and indeed I can speak with the more freedom, because he was one who lived so that his sermons might be read in his conversation; for he was an example to believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, and in purity. He exemplified the power of his principles in religion, by his close walk with God; and though his arguments for christianity were always demonstrative, and his persuasions strong, yet there was a greater force in the shining virtues of his life; for by these men were convinced that himself believed what he preached.

_Preaching the gospel was the very pleasure of his soul: *and the zeal of God's house had eaten him up.* He was so entirely devoted to the work of the ministry, and his heart so engaged in it, that from the time of his first appearing in public to the last, his life was one continued scene of labour and toil. His close study and constant preaching (frequently three times a day) did greatly exhaust his animal spirits, and enfeeble his strength. Yet to the last he discovered a becoming zeal against the prevailing errors of the day, for he knew no face in the pulpit: his soul was too great to balk any truth that he owned, for the frowns or flatteries of the greatest: and I may say of him as the apostle does of himself, *That he had obtained mercy to be faithful.*

Thomas Harrison (cont)

_With what application of mind, and unwearied diligence did he discharge his pastoral office, not only preaching in season and out of season, but in visiting those under his charge, encouraging the serious, gently reproofing the froward, and instructing those that opposed themselves; defending the great truths of the gospel, and setting them in a clear light?

_As for the matter of his sermons it was always solid and substantial. He dispensed the bread of life to nourish your souls, and not curiosities to indulge your fancies. Christ crucified was the sum of his preaching. He took care to deliver the great and important truths of the gospel, in *sound* as well as *acceptable words*. He did not debase the majesty of divine truths by a sordid negligence of speech; but spoke in a style correct and strong, as became the oracles of God. His notions were not only weighty, but there was a conquering force in his well-chosen expressions; for as *Job* says, *How forcible are right words!* In short, *He was a workman that needed not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth*, and giving to every soul a portion in due season. He preached so as to save himself and them that heard him. A fervent love to Christ and the souls of men seemed to reign in his breast, as appeared by his flaming but regular zeal to exalt the glory of the Redeemer, and promote the salvation of souls. He did not count his life dear to himself, so that he might finish his course with joy, and the ministry which he had received of the Lord Jesus Christ, to testify the gospel of the grace of God. And alas! It is to be feared, that in judgement to us who survive, God has removed this excellent person from the church militant to the church triumphant; where this star shines with an unfading luster, though it dispenses no light and influence to us below. And that which aggravates our loss is this, that this useful minister is removed in the midst of his days. His removal is sudden to us, but it was not surprising to him: for he lived in the constant expectation of his death, as may be collected from an expression he used more than once in family-prayer a little before his decease; he begged of God, *That the tottering of his frail tabernacle might always put him in mind of its falling down*. And at the beginning of his last illness he told a near relation, he should *study no more*.

A little after he said, *O how sweet will rest be to me after my weary labour!* At another time he expressed his propriety in God: God (says he) *is my God, and I have his gracious presence with me. O how precious is the blood of Christ, and how excellent the union between Christ and believers! For it is indissoluble*. And when refreshed once with taking something that was agreeable, he cried out, *O how refreshing will be the streams of the river of God!* But his distemper affecting his head, he soon grew delirious, and a few days put an end to his excellent and valuable life._

Mr. Harrison had a son named Thomas who was also a minister. He became the pastor of the church in Little Wild Street, Lincoln's Inn fields, at the decease of the Rev. John Piggott. He was solemnly ordained by imposition of hands, April 18, 1715. (Crosby Vol IV p 156)

Ebenezer Wilson

Ebenezer Wilson. He was son of Mr. John Wilson mentioned in our account of Hitchin in Hertfordshire. It appears he was designed for the ministry by his excellent father, and for this purpose was trained up at an Academy at Sheffield in Yorkshire, under the tuition of Mr. Timothy Jollie. (In the account of the Rev. John Shuttlewood in the *Nonconformist Memorial*, Vol II, p 397, it is said that Mr. Wilson amongst others mentioned, _who rose to eminence in life, _studied under him in Sulby near Welford in

Northamptonshire.) On leaving the Academy he was chosen minister of the Pithay, Bristol, where he continued several years.

While in this situation he married the daughter of Mr. George Founds, ejected by the act of Uniformity from High Wycombe in Buckinghamshire, and afterwards pastor of the church Broadmead, Bristol.

When Mr. Harrison went to Lorimier's Hall, with part of the members from the church in Petty-France, several of those who remained, and some of considerable ability resolved to keep up their church state, and invited Mr. Wilson to settle among them which he accepted. These (says Crosby) claimed to themselves the title of *the ancient church* because they stood by the ancient constitution and settlement, i.e. they objected to singing of psalms which had been introduced by the church in Lormer's Hall. Though Mr. Wilson was a worthy man, and a scholar, yet he was not a popular preacher; and as the people were few, so they continued. But as some of them were rich, and Mr. Wilson being generally respected, they contributed largely for his support, and he had a tolerable maintenance from them. We find his name signed to the Circular letter of the Western Association in 1699 and 1704. It is probable it was about this time that Mr. Wilson came to London, as we learn from Crosby that an Association of thirteen churches in London was formed in this year, and that Mr. Ebenexer Wilson wished to be admitted into the Assembly as an Auditor of their debates and arguments, which was readily consented to. Crosby does not mention the time of his death, but says his funeral sermon was preached by Mr. Wallin. Mr. Wilson had six children one of which was Mr. Samuel Wilson, first pastor of the church in Prescott Street.

In concluding the history of this church we mention a circumstance to corroborate our opinion that the Baptist Catechism was compiled by Mr. William Collins. In the records of the church at the Pithay, Bristol, there is a letter from this excellent man to Mr. Andrew Gifford, dated July 5, 1698. From this it appears that a number of the Catechism had been sent to Bristol, and it is said, *some thousands are left of the last impression.* It is evident from the following extract that the work of catechizing children was not cordially entered upon in London, a circumstance not greatly to the honor of our forefathers. *I do heartily wish (says Mr. Collins) that the work of catechizing was carried on here with a zeal equivalent to that which appears in your parts; you in the West are much to be commended on many accounts. The Lord bless and prosper all your designs for his glory and the good of souls. I hope the Lord is amongst us here in London, more than formerly; although there have been great divisions, and differences among churches in these parts; but I hope the Lord will turn all this to advantage in the end. His ways are in the dark, his paths in deep waters, and his footsteps are not known; but in the winding up of every providence we may expect the manifestation of the glory of God's wisdom, grace and faithfulness towards his people. There is a need of, great and faithfulness towards his people. There is need of, great need of, a loud cry to God on behalf of the poor Protestants of France; that such as are recovered may have the spirit of God, and glory rest upon them in the clearness of its illumination, and efficacy of its consolations; and that such as are not recovered may be made to stand upon their feet again. My dear*

love to yourself, and hopeful son, and to good brother Fownes. The dew of heaven always rest upon your unworthy brother, and fellow laboureres in the gospel,

WILLIAM COLLINS

Church at Lorimer's-Hall *

(* A Lorimer is a bridle-maker.)

THIS meeting-house is thus described by Maitland, in his history of London:—A small, but convenient hall, at London Wall. It is supposed that Mr. John Taylor, who was rejected by the church in White-s-alley, Moorfields, on account of his having avowed Calvinistic sentiments, and who took this place in 1699, had either left it, or occupied it only once on the Lord's day.

When Mr. Thomas Harrison left Mr. William Collins and his people in Petty France in 1700-1, many of that church, if not the great majority, seceded with him, on account of the church at Petty France having resolved that singing should not be introduced into public worship. This practice formed the feature by which this church was distinguished from their old friends, who soon after removed to Artillery-lane. Mr. Harrison, who appears to have been very eminent for talents, learning, zeal, and usefulness, was speedily removed from his labours. He died at age thirty-five, August 14, 1702, a few months before his venerable pastor, of whose church he became a member in the year 1676, at the age of twelve years. For a fuller account of him, taken from Mr. Piggott's funeral sermon, see vol. ii. p. 407–412. Mr. Harrison, who will be again mentioned in the account of Pinners-hall, preached a Lord's day morning lecture there for several years.

1704: Mr. Nathaniel Hodges.

This church was without a pastor in April 1704, when the meeting of the General Assemble was held there for three days. Their messengers were Messrs. Robert Byand, George Richardson, and Richard Wilkinson. It is supposed that the Rev. Nathaniel Hodges became the pastor of this church soon after 1704, and continued so till Mr. Ebenezer Wilson left Artillery-lane in 1708, as he and his people then united with that church, and from that time he was the pastor of the united churches of Lorimer's-hall and Artillery-lane, until he relinquished his ministry.

Mr. Hodges had been educated with a view to the ministry at a Dissenting academy at Taunton. From thence in 1698, when twenty-three years of age, he accepted an invitation to settle as pastor with the church at Plymouth, where he resided three years. His name is signed to a manuscript letter before me, sent by the Western Association assembled at Taunton, June 17, 1701. In the following January, having (as the Plymouth records state it) succeeded to earthly honours, he left the church, and settled in London. It is likely he succeeded to some property, as he was, it is evident, of a rich family. He appears to have joined the church in Petty France under Mr. William Collins, and it is probable some of his relations were members of that church. The last entry in the handwriting of

that excellent pastor records, June 7, 1702, that _brother Hodges was taken into the church._

Mr. Hodges has been already introduced to the reader as employed to present an Address to King George I, in 1715. A Tory newspaper writer, on that occasion, intimated that he had been brought up to a trade. _Cardinal Wolsey was of as mean extraction as these; and the principal of them, Mr. Hodges was of a trade that ought not to be thrown in his teeth, considering that it first afforded us that excellent astrologer, John Partridge, and has since given them so good a divine in the person of Mr. Hodges; to which holy science, that humble occupation has a more immediate tendency of its own nature, because it trains a man up regularly to the curing of soles.

1727: Death of Mr. Hodges.

Crosby says, _His uncle, a gentleman of a great estate, did not approve of his inclination to the study of divinity; and finding he could not be diverted therefrom, nor persuaded to join in the ministry of the established church, where he could have promoted him to some dignity, made him afterwards, as long as he lived, feel the smart of his resentment for his close adherence to what he believed to be truth. Upon the death of his uncle, *

(* Probably Sir William Hodges, an eminent Spanish merchant, and returned a Member of Parliament for St. Michael_s Mount, Cornwall, in 1705 and 1708. He died July 31, 1714, and was buried in the church of St. Catharine, Coleman-street, London. *Noble_s Contin. Of Granger_s Biographical History of England*, vol. ii. p. 207.)

when he became by inheritance possessed of a large estate, he laid down his ministry, and had the honour of knighthood conferred upon him by his Majesty George I. He died August 27, 1727, in the fifty-second year of his age, and lies buried in Stepney church-yard, where a fine monument is erected by his lady to his memory._

1727: Character of Mr. Hodges.

I find the name of this minister signed to a letter sent to Mr. Peart, of Bromsgrove, in Worcestershire, dated London, Sept. 10, 1717, in connection with those of Dr. John Gale, Messrs. Joseph Burroughs, and Benjamin Stinton. The subject of this was whether the Greek preposition in Matt. iii. 16, which our translators had rendered *out* of the water, was rightly translated. It is evident from this letter, that Mr. Hodges was considered among his brethren as a person of respectable learning and good abilities.

Mr. Hodges was one of the non-subscribers at the synod at Salters_-hall in 1719, which is all the further information we have respecting his ministerial character. It is probable he laid down his ministry soon after that period, though it is not said at what time it was he received the honour of knighthood. Thus it appears that his _earthly honours_ eventually proved destructive to him, at least to his character as a minister. *

(* The apostle Paul was fully convinced of the dangers to which he was exposed, as it related to his ministerial engagements. _I keep under my body,_ said he, _and bring it into subjection; lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a cast-away,_ 1 Cor. ix. 27. Neglecting to watch against the spirit of the world, Mr. Hodges seems to have exemplified the necessity of that care, as well as to be a standing monument of the awful denunciation in Zechariah against the idol shepherd, &c. ch. xi. 17.)

So true is it, that *it is hard for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God*. It is a very affecting thing that he who, when young, chose rather to suffer his rich uncle's displeasure than to violate his conscience and abandon his principles, should, after he was forty years of age, be carried away with the deceitfulness of riches, and the lust of other things, and this become unfruitful. It is not said what became of the _large estate,_ at his death, except that a part of it was expended in erecting a fine monument over his renowned dust! We have never heard that he left any part of his money to the poor of Christ's flock, or to any charitable institution.

Thus terminated the _earthly honours_ of Sir Nathaniel Hodges; the only Baptist minister of whom we have heard that he received the honour of knighthood; the only Baptist minister who laid down his ministry on account of his being elevated to the rank of a knight, and, like Demas; deserted his friends, having lived this present world. Such instances are indeed rare; but they are deeply affecting, and should teach all ministers, especially if they are rich, or expect to possess riches, earnestly to pray that they may be preserved from the *love* of money, the root of all evil. The following is the inscription upon what Crosby calls the _fine monument._ By comparing it with those on the tombs of his contemporaries, Joseph Stennett, Edward Wallin, and others, the reader may be able to judge who possessed the greater honour. Under the coat of arms is this inscription:—

Sr. Nathl. Hodges, Knt.

Of Bethnall Green.

Obt. The 27th of August, 1727.

Aetatis 52.

1726 to 1756: Dr. Kinch, Mr. Weatherley, and Dr. Jefferies.

After the resignation of Mr. Hodges, the church chose as his successor Dr. Kinch, (of the medical profession, as I suppose,) who was a member of the church in Paul's-alley, Barbican, was called by them to the work of the ministry in 1720, and was settled as pastor here, on April 26, 1721. When the General Body was formed in 1727, he was one of the first committee. He was one of a deputation from that Body to carry an address to

court in 1727. In April, 1731, he was reported at the Library as having died during the past year.

Mr., John Weatherley succeeded Dr. Kinch. He had been educated by Mr. Grove, of Taunton, and was a man much respected. A discourse preached at Barbican, 1750, entitled *_Irreligion the Ground of God_s Displeasure,_* was his only publication. I find his name in the list of approved ministers of the three denominations in 1732. He died soon after preaching the sermon above mentioned.

He was succeeded by Dr. Joseph Jefferies. He is first mentioned as belonging to Pinners_-hall in the minutes of the General Body, in 1756. He probably preached one part of the day there, and the other at Artillery-lane. He died suddenly in 1783, as he was returning from Mr. Noble_s funeral.

The remains of this church removed to Worship-street, and it was dissolved about the year 1800. It is very affecting to find that any part of a church which at one period was so zealous for the orthodox doctrines of the Trinity, and the proper divinity of our Lord Jesus Christ, and that of the Holy Spirit, (see the account of the church in Petty France, p. 337,) should have been at length swallowed up in the vortex of Socinianism. At what period its ministers became Arians or Socinians is not exactly known; but it was certainly considered a Trinitarian church in the year 1719 because it was invited to unite with the Baptist Fund when the church in Barbican was refused.

Church at Limehouse

This church is mentioned as belonging to the general that met in London from 1689 to 1693. It was also one of thirteen churches which united in Association in London in April 1704; and also another of ten churches in 1705. (Crosby Vol. IV, pp. 8, 9) Mr. Leonard Harrison was the pastor during the above period: but we have no particular concerning him.

Church at Mayes [Maze] Pond

Leonard Harrison

This church is mentioned as belonging to the general Assembly in 1692. It had been very recently formed, and originated in a dispute which occurred in the church at Horsly-down. Mr. Issac Marlow, one of the members, had written with great acrimony against the practice of singing, which had been introduced into that society, calling it by the names of *_error, apostacy, human tradition, prelimited forms, carnal worship, &c._* Mr. Keach replied in 1691, and entitled his work, *The Breach repaired in God_s worship*. From this it appears that the church had sung at the Lord_s Table for 16 or 18 years before; and in *mixed assemblies* on the days of Thanksgiving for 12 or 14 years. At length it was referred to the solemn decision of the whole church, and (says Mr. K.) *_but about 5 or 6 at most as I remember were against it._* It was now agreed that the congregation should sing after sermon only *_that if those few brethren and sisters who*

were not satisfied, could not stay they might freely go forth and we would not be offended with them._ (*Dedication to Breach repaired*, p 8, 9) Crosby says, _Notwithstanding the success Mr. Keach had in this controversy, as appeared by many other churches of the Baptists which also followed his example; yet in his own church the discontent of those few that first opposed him, through the instigation (too much to be feared creatures of Mr. Marlow) drew over some others in the church to join with them and wrought up their uneasiness to that pitch, that at last a separation ensued and thereupon another church was founded on the same principles, *singing only excepted*, which, through time, and the succession of pastors, is now [1740] become a creditable church._ Mr. Samuel Mee was the minister in 1692. We have no information respecting him or the period of his ministry in this church. The practice of disusing singing in public worship was continued till after the death of Mr. Edward Wallin, 1733. Mr. West his successor made it a condition of his acceptance of their call to the pastoral office that they should introduce the practice, which has been continued from this time. (Crosby Vol. II. p 394)

Church at Mile End Green

The particulars we have of this society are very few. It existed, however, soon after the restoration, perhaps prior to that event. The following article extracted from part of an Old book, without a Title page, written by one of the people called Quakers, will throw a little light on its origin, and give us information who were its ministers in 1669.

It appears one of their members, named *Hester Bird*, had embraced the principles of the Quakers, and for several years had absented herself from the communion of the church, they at length, after repeated warnings and exhortations, proceeded to separate her from the church, and sent her a letter stating the scriptural grounds on which they had proceeded. This was published by the Quakers, under the title of _A COPY OF THE BAPTISTS_ BILL OF ENCOMMUNICATION._

George Barrett

_We the church of Christ, meeting near Bow, of which you Hester Bird were once a member, do by these presents, signify and declare, that you have turned out of the right way of the Lord both in doctrine and in practice. viz. Departing from the foundation doctrine of justification by grace, from the resurrection of this body; the personal coming of the Lord Jesus; and the holy ordinances of Christ, viz. Baptism, Communion of Saints, and the Lord_s supper; and you having been by Us, or by some of Us, admonished and remaining incorrigible Wee do hereby declare, that you are gone out from us because you were not of us, having rejected the right way of the Lord and Us his people, Wee also do reject you, according to the sentence of the Lord expressed by the Apostles in these scriptures in the margent. (Jer. 7:8, 9. 1 John 2:19. 2 Tim 2:17. 1 Tim 1:20. Acts 3:22, 23.)

GEORGE BARRETT.

Signed in the name and by	BENJAMIN DENNIS.
the appointment of the Church	EDWARD ANNESLEY.
the 17 th of the 7 th month,	RICHARD MATHYSON.
1669.	RALPH CHAPMAN.

George Barrett. He attended the meetings of the general Assembly in 1689 and 1692, and was one of the ministers who had written on the subject of singing the praises of God in the Assembly for public worship mentioned in our account of the settlement of this controversy in the churches. Vol Ip 520-523.

Benjamin Dennis

Benjamin Dennis. He appears to have been an Assistant with Mr. Barrett, and a person of note among the churches. We find him mentioned with the Baptist ministers who congratulated James 11. On his declaration of Indulgence. He was appointed by the general Assembly in London 1693, to accompany Mr. Richard Adams as Messenger to the Bristol Assembly in that year. He accompanied Mr. Keach also in an itinerant excursion to visit the churches in the different counties soon after the revolution. The narrative of the *Life and deplorable end of Mr. John Child*, was attested by Mr. Dennis, who it appears had been long acquainted with that unhappy man, and visited him during his awful affliction. The account of his visit is given in the Narrative, p 9, 10. Mr. Dennis died in August 1702, and is mentioned with respect by Mr. Piggott in his sermons, p 238.

We have no further account of this church; but it is probable it never became wholly extinct as there is still a church at Bow, which for the last twenty years has been under the care of Mr. William Newman, the worthy Tutor of the Baptist Academical Institution at Stepney.

Broad Street Wapping

The church assembling at this place was that founded by Mr. John Spilsbury in 1633. It is to be regretted that we have so few particulars respecting it; as a correct history of the first church of the Particular baptists would have been an account it is probable of the origin of several others. It was by persons who separated from it the church in Devonshire Square was founded; and also some years after, the church now assembling in Prescott Street, Goodman's fields. In mentioning this latter circumstance, Crosby says, They were part of that ancient flourishing church which met in Broad Street, Wapping, who with him [Mr. Samuel Wilson] came off from them, and built that new meeting-house of which they are now [1740] possessed. The remaining part continued some years together, but labouring under many difficulties, in the end, were necessitated to dissolve their church state. (Crosby Vol 1V p 327)

Hercules Collins

We have given some particulars of the founder Mr. John Spilsbury in another part of this work. It is probable he was succeeded by

Hercules Collins. He became the minister of this church in 1677, and watched over it till his death, a period of twenty-five years. He attended the meetings of the general assembly in London. We are indebted for what we know of this worthy minister to the sermon preached on occasion of his death by Mr. John Piggott. From this it appears he was taken off suddenly, and at a period when further usefulness was expected, as it is said _according to the course of nature he might have been useful for many years to come._

Mr. Piggott says, _Of your late worthy pastor, Mr. Hercules Collins, concerning whom I have need to say the less, because his doctrine you have heard, and his example you have seen for so many years; the former was agreeable to the sentiments of the reformed churches in all fundamental articles of faith, and the latter such as *did adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour.*

_He began to be religious early, and continued faithful to the last. He was not shocked by the fury of persecutors, though he suffered imprisonment for the name of Christ.

Hercules Collins (cont)

_He was one that had a solid acquaintance with divine things, about which he always spoke with a becoming seriousness and a due relish; and I must say, I hardly ever knew a man that did more constantly promote religious discourse (a practice almost out of fashion:) he shewed an unwearied endeavour to recover the decayed power of religion, for he lived what he preached, and it pleased God to succeed his endeavours in the gospel after a wonderful manner. Are there not here many that must call him Father, whom *he hath begotten through the gospel?* May it not be said of this man and that woman, they were born here?

_If he had not some men's accuracy, yet it was made up by a constant flame; for no man could preach with a more affectionate regard to the salvation of souls. And how well he discharged the other branches of his pastoral function, this church is a witness, whom he has watched over and visited above five and twenty years.

_He had *Luther's* three qualifications for a gospel-minister; he was much given to meditation and prayer, and hardly any man was more grievously tempted of the devil than your deceased pastor: though for years Satan in a great measure was bruised under his feet, and God had so cleared up his love to his soul, that he could say, *I know in whom I have believed, I know to whom I have committed my soul, I know that my Redeemer liveth; and I know that when this earthly house of my tabernacle is dissolved, I have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.* His constant walk was in the *fear of the Lord, and in the comforts of the Holy Ghost.* He had a *full assurance*

of the love of God for many years; yet this did not make him careless and negligent in duty, it did not lift him up above measure, but kept him at the foot of Christ.

Hercules Collins

How exemplary was his submission under personal and relative trials; his own indispositions were frequent and great, *yet in patience he possessed his soul*, and was always learning from the discipline of the rod; and how well he carried it under the affliction he had with a near relation, you cannot but know. I confess I have thought him in that respect one of the best examples that ever I know; surely no person could be more tender and sympathizing. In a word he was faithful in every relation, a man of truth and integrity, one entirely devoted to the service of the temple, and zealously bent to promote the interest of the Lord Redeemer. But alas! This useful minister is silenced, and a few days indisposition has given him a remove from the toils of the pulpit, to the triumphs of the throne.

_I confess I had not the opportunity of conversing with him in his last illness; but I am informed by those that were with him, that he retained an excellent savour of divine things to the day of his death, and did discourse but the morning before he died after a very moving manner, being greatly affected with those words, They overcame by the blood of the Lamb (This was the last text that he preached on, it being on a funeral occasion.)_Tis true, he is fallen in battle but he died *more than a conqueror; and having fought the good fight, and finished his course, and kept the faith*, he quitted the body, that he might receive an *unfading crown of glory*._

Mr. Collins died the 4th of October 1702, and was buried in Bunhill fields, where a stone was erected to his memory. His widow did not long survive him as she died April 6, 1703. *Stow's Chronicle, Vol 11 p 55*) He wrote a large pamphlet in quarto, entitled, *The Sandy foundation of infants_ baptism shaken*. (Crosby Vol 111 p 130) He also published in 1691 a pamphlet on the same subject, entitled, *Believers_ baptism from heaven, and of divine institution: Infant baptism from earth and of human invention*. This last has been lately republished.

Paul_s Alley, Barbican

Before we proceed to mention the pastors of the church that assembled here, which we apprehend have been both Particular and General Baptists, it is necessary to give some account of the Meeting-house which has been a place of great resort by persons of the Baptist denomination during the last century. This is a very ancient building, and the date of its erection cannot be ascertained, but the late Mr. Daniel Noble, one of the pastors of the general Baptist church, has been heard to say, that it was built originally for a play-house, but the government would not license it. If this be correct it must have been at the beginning of the civil wars, as it was used for a meeting-house soon after. It was originally very large, capable of containing three thousand persons. What has made it remarkable is on account of the baptistery which was erected here for the general use of the churches in the city. It is a little singular that there was no convenience

of this kind till after the end of the seventeenth century; we apprehend it arose from the scrupulosity of the ministers to imitate exactly the manner of administration, and therefore they chose *rivers* for the purpose of baptizing. At length, however, the inconveniences that were experienced overcame their objections, and two baptisteries were provided, one in Barbican, and the other in Fair Street, Horsly-down. The latter was not in a Meeting-house, but in a building used entirely for this purpose. Crosby has given the following description of that in Paul's Alley, which it may be desirable to copy. _This Baptisterion, or cistern, is fixed just before the pulpit, the sides and bottom of which are made with good polished stone, and round the top is put a kirb or marble, about a foot wide; and round it, at about a foot or two distance, is set up an iron rail of handsome cypher work, under the pulpit are the stairs that lead down it, and at the top of these are two folding doors which open into the three rooms behind the meeting-house which are large and handsomely wainscotted. Under one of these rooms there is a well sunk down to the spring of the water; at the top of this there is a leaden pipe fixed, from which a pipe goes into the basin, near the top of it, by which it is filled with water; at the bottom of the bason, there is a brass plug, from whence there goes another pipe into the said well to empty it again._

The expenses attending this amounted to upwards of six hundred pounds. Part of this was paid by the congregation at Paul's Alley. One hundred and thirty pounds were collected towards it by the different churches in and about London, and the rest was defrayed by two worthy gentlemen, Messrs. Thomas and John Hollis, who reserved to themselves the right of granting liberty to those who were permitted to use it, by a certificate under their hands, on condition of their paying two shillings for each person baptized. This sum was exacted for the payment of servants, the use of clothes, &c. &c. In the Vestry a registry was kept of all the persons baptized, and by whom it was performed. Of late years this place has been much disused, as almost all our Meeting-houses are provided with every convenience for administering the ordinance, and are always crowded with persons to witness the solemnity of the scene; so that if there were any ground for the charge of *indecenty*, which has been frequently made by some illiberal Paedobaptist ministers, there would be no want to witness to support it.

We proceed to give an account of the Particular Baptist ministers who presided over the church in this place till nearly the close of the 17th century, at which period the church books, still preserved, commence, and an abstract of which was published in _The Universal Theological Magazine,_ for 1803. The assertion therefore of a late respectable writer, that this church was of the *general* Baptist denomination from the origin of the Society is totally destitute of foundation.

John Gosnold. This worthy minister had the honour of being ejected from the established church by the Act of Uniformity. _He was, says Crosby, a man of great learning and piety. In the time of the civil wars, when men were upon search after truth, and made the scriptures the standard of their enquiries, he became convinced, that the *Baptists* were the *only* people, who closely adhered in faith and practice to the written word; and accordingly he joined himself to them. He was chosen pastor of a congregation at Barbican in London, and was one of those ministers who subscribed the *Apology*

presented to King Charles II. on occasion of Venner's conspiracy. He was a pious practical preacher, of singular modesty and moderation, unconcerned in the disputes of the times, and much esteemed and valued by men of note and dignity in the established church; who, notwithstanding the change of his opinion in the point of baptism, kept up a correspondence with him. Particularly, he was intimate with Dr. Tillotson, afterwards archbishop of Canterbury, who used to attend his week-day lecture. He was so popular in his preaching, as to draw after him people of all denominations. His audience, in a large building (which still continues no inconsiderable place of worship, though eight or nine rooms have since been taken out of it, and the upper gallery quite unoccupied) was usually computed to the near *three thousand*, and among them very often six or seven clergymen in their gowns, who sat in a convenient place, under a large gallery, where they were seen by few. The great number of his auditors, and the figure which some of them made, was shortly after the fire of London the occasion of an application from the officers of the parish of Cripplegate, in which his meeting stood, desiring that he would make a collection for the poor, who abounded in that parish, especially after that dreadful fire. Accordingly he made a collection, amounting to upwards of fifty pounds, and the church voluntarily continued the collection for above twenty years. He published a small treatise, entitled, *The doctrine of baptisms*; and another concerning *the laying on of hands*.

Dr. Calamy says. _He was bred in the Charterhouse school, and in Pembrokehall in Cambridge; and was afterwards chaplain to the lord Grey. He was against *infant baptism*. He was deprived of his liberty of preaching, and forced to hide and skulk, though he was always peaceably minded, and never gave any disturbance to the government. He had a great zeal against *socinianism*, making it much his business to expose the opinions of such as were that way given, and to keep his people from that infection. He was much respected by his flock. He is interred in the burying-ground near Bunhill-fields, where there is this inscription upon his tomb-stone.

_Here lieth the body of Mr. John Gosnold, a faithful minister of the gospel, who departed this life October the third 1678, and in the 53rd year of his age. _ [*They that turn many to righteousness shall shine as the stars for ever and ever. Dan. 12:3.*]

Before one of his books there is a small print of him, by Van Hore, which is very scarce. His name is frequently signed with the Particular Baptist ministers in our first Vol. (Crosby Vol. I. p. 61-63. Calamy's *Contin.* p. 53-57. Wilson's *Hist. of Dissenting Churches*, Vol. III. p. 235. Stowe's *Chronicle of Strype*.)

Thomas Plant. He succeeded Mr. John Gosnold as the pastor of the church in Barbican in 1678. He was a very popular preacher, and excited so greatly the rage of his persecutors, that he had once *nine warrants* out against him at the same time, but he was so much beloved in the parish, that all the constables who had the warrants, sent him private notice to get out of the way. His meeting, however, was disturbed, and the pulpit and forms broke to pieces, by orders from *lord Bridgwater*, whose house then stood where Bridgwater Square has been since built, which is not far from the meeting. It is remarkable that his lordship's house was soon afterwards burnt down to the ground, and

several of his children, and his *gentleman*, as he was called, who used to go in his name to disturb the meetings, were burnt in it. Mr. Plant was so much opposed, that he used frequently to pass the streets in such disguises to escape detection, that many of the members of his church did not know him when they met him.

Mr. Plant had been a minister in London before he settled with the church in Barbican. He was one of those who signed the investigation of Mr. Hick's works against the Quakers, and afterwards published these transactions, entitled, *„An account of the two meetings at Barbican and Wheeler's Street, on account of the Quaker's appeal to the Baptists against Thomas Hicks. 1674.*

Mr. Plant was one of those ministers who was imposed upon by the hollow professions of James II. and in company with several others waited on him to present an address of thanks for his declaration of liberty of conscience.

In the year 1688, a work was published by Mr. Plant, and Mr. Benjamin Dennis, entitled the *Mischief of Persecution, exemplified by a true narrative of the life and deplorable end of Mr. John Child*. This was written and prepared for the press just after Mr. Child's death in 1684, but the severity of the times (say they) were such, that no printer would undertake it, nor durst the compilers appear to own it. But after the kindness of Mr. Plant and others towards government, has been manifested, they were permitted to publish it, by a licenser of government writing on the title page, *„May 7, 1688. This may be printed. C.N.„*

This awful work contains a section entitled, *„The effect of a conference had with Mr. John Child, by T.P. between whom there had been for divers years more than a common intimacy and conversation.„* From this it is likely Mr. Plant has lived in the neighborhood of Newport Pagnel.

It is likely Mr. Plant died about 1699, as in that year he was succeeded by Mr. Richard Allen.

Richard Allen. He succeeded Mr. Plant at Barbican in 1693, and brought with him a small congregation from Turner's hall, who united with the church at Barbican. He has been pastor of the church at Turner's hall for many years, and it must have been during this time that the persecutions he experienced as mentioned by Crosby took place. He says, that as Mr. Allen was preaching a lecture on a Thursday, he with ten more persons were seized and carried to Newgate. He was fined ten pounds, and the rest each seven marks. After they had lain in Newgate six or seven weeks, some of his friends having interest with sheriffs, were admitted as sureties for his good behavior, so that his fine was remitted and he was discharged: as were the rest on paying their fines.

At another time he was preaching in White's Alley, Moorfields, and expecting to be concealed from the fury of the persecutors the people had assembled to hear him at five o'clock in the morning. But some troopers coming into the place they very much abused the people; and from being incensed against the preacher threw one of the forms

at him, as he was in the pulpit. So great was their rage that they did not depart till they had damaged the place to the amount of forty or fifty pounds.

Mr. Allan continued with the people in Barbican till his death, and preached till within a few weeks of that event, which took place in February 20, 1717. His corpse was taken from the meeting house in White's Alley, Moorfields, where Mr. Abraham Mulliner, a general Baptist was the minister; and carried to the dissenter's burying ground in Bunhillfields, being followed by a great number of ministers and others. Mr. Mulliner delivered an oration on mortality at the grave; and the next Lord's day his funeral sermon was preached by Mr. Nathaniel Hodges at the meeting-house in Barbican.

Crosby speaks of Mr. Alley in the following manner. _He was a man of great piety and moderation; a famous preacher much noted in his day for his ingenuity, usefulness, piety, and charity. Though he had not the advantages of a learned education; yet from being a man of good natural endowments, and of great industry, after he was called to the ministry, he attained to such an acquaintance with the oriental languages and other parts of useful learning as to excel many who had been educated at schools. He was considered as belonging to the General baptist denomination, though he associated chiefly with particular baptist ministers.

When the Association of churches was formed in London by the particular baptists in 1704, Mr. Allen and his church were admitted to it. And for several years both before and after this he had been a member of the Society of Calvinistical ministers who met every week at the Hanover Coffeehouse in Finch Lane.

Mr. Allen published several Works of which the following are the titles.

1. An Essay to prove singing of psalms with conjoining voices a christian duty, and to resolve the doubts concerning it. 8vo. 1696.
2. A Gainful death the end of a truly christian life. A sermon at the funeral of Mr. John Griffith. 8vo. 1700.
3. A Sermon on the death of King William III. 4to. 1700.
4. A Sermon on the Union of England and Scotland, 8vo. 1707.

He was the Author also of two Volumes in octavo, entitled *Biographia Ecclesiastica*; or the lives of the most eminent fathers of the christian church, who flourished in the first four centuries, and part of the fifth. This was published without his name.

Joseph Stennett. Though we shall have to speak more largely of this worthy and learned minister in another place, yet it seems necessary to introduce him here, as it will throw some light on the gradual decline of the church in Paul's Alley from Calvinism, till it sunk, in the time of Dr. Gale and Dr. Foster, and others, into Arianism, if not Socinianism, till at length these errors wrought its complete extirpation.

We have mentioned that Mr. Allen brought with him the church at Turner_s-Hall, and in the Articles of Union between the societies Mr. Stennett is set down as the *minister* of the joint society. This office was different to that of elder or pastor, and answered to that of assistant. Mr. Stennett was a Calvinist, but the majority of the society in Barbican being of different sentiments, the seed was sown for an interruption of their harmony. On the 4th of April 1700, a complaint was made to the church that Mr. Stennett had preached on the points of dispute between the Remonstrants (or Arminians) and the Calvinists; and some brethren were desired to wait upon him, with a request that he would not preach upon the controverted points any more. They were also desired to acquaint him that it was reported that he had preached at Loriner_s-Hall, and thereby abetted the schism from the church at White_s Alley (see the account of Mr. Thomas Harrison.), which the church at Barbican had declared ought to be discouraged by all ministers as well as others; and therefore the church desired him to desist from preaching there in the future. Mr. Stennett replied that the doctrines he had preached of late were the same as he had formerly preached there without offence; and as he thought there was then a greater necessity than ever to preach upon controverted points, he could not promise to desist. As to his preaching at Loriner_s-hall, he did not know it was a just occasion of offence; for though the separation of the people there was irregular, and he had used several arguments to induce them to acknowledge their irregularity, yet as they were now set down together as a separate church, it made him the more free to preach amongst them. This answer was deemed unsatisfactory; yet so great was the affection of the church towards him, that they expressed their willingness to pass by what had occurred, if he would forbear preaching upon the controverted points, which, say they, have been found destructive to many churches. The answer of Mr. Stennett expressed his thankfulness for the kindness of the church, and intimated his willingness to desist from preaching at Loriner_s-hall; but not upon the controversies before mentioned. It is presumed Mr. Stennett on this occasion withdrew from his connexion with this church; and had our ministers in general manifested this strict adherence to the *Calvinistic* doctrines which Mr. Stennett did, instead of that spurious candour and moderation expressed by some others; there is no doubt but many churches would have been preserved from the whirlpood of Socinianism, which has swallowed up some Particular Baptist Societies, and nearly all of those which at the end of the seventeenth century belonged to the General Baptists.

Church in Walbrook

I HAVE not been able to ascertain what was the place of worship which the separatists from the church at Spitalfields, formerly under the care of Mr. William Collins, obtained for public worship, but it was situated in Walbrook.

It is apprehended that these were a minority of the members, though they kept possession of the old church records, probably taking out from the book those which related to the church since it had met in Artillery-lane; it is certain, however, with that exception, that the records comprehend the history of the church from 1676 till the time it received into connection the church in Devonshire-square, at which place it continues to assemble.

The records of the separated church are thus described:— A catalogue of the names of the members of the church now meeting in Walbrook, under the care of the Rev. E. Wilson. Then follow the names of about 120 persons, men and women. After the names are entered alphabetically, at the opposite end of the Petty France church-book, is added, A record of the acts of the church, commencing January 4, 1707-8.

1708: Mr. Ebenezer Wilson.

It is evident that Mr. Crosby has, in his account of Mr. Ebenezer Wilson and his congregation, confounded the two separations which took place in the church of Petty France. He says, At the death of Mr. William Collins, pastor of an ancient congregation in Spitalfields, that church agreed to unite with a small church that met at Lorimers_-hall, and to bring in the practice of singing psalms, which had not heretofore been used among them. They chose Mr. Nathaniel Hodges to be pastor of the united churches.

The separation here spoken of was from the church in Petty France, in 1692, before it removed to Spitalfields. Mr. Hodges was chosen, probably to succeed Mr. Thomas Harrison, at Lorimers_-hall, some time after 1704. Mr. Crosby adds, Several members of the ancient church, and some of considerable ability, were displeased at the practice of singing psalms, and separated from the rest, claiming to themselves the title of the church, because they stood by the ancient constitution and settlement. These, resolving to keep up their church state and public worship, invited Mr. Ebenezer Wilson to come to them from Bristol, and soon after chose him to be their pastor. Now, upon the supposition that the church in Artillery-lane, Spitalfields, chose Mr. Wilson in 1705, then the separation, of which Mr. Crosby speaks, took place between that period and January 1707-8, and every thing becomes plain. After Mr. Wilson and his friends, who were anti-psalmodists, had left Artillery-lane, they who remained seem to have been joined by the people of Lorimers_-hall, who were also for public singing; and Mr. Nathaniel Hodges, the pastor at Lorimers_-hall, became the pastor of the united churches.

1712: Mr. Ebenezer Wilson.

The records mention several acts of the church at its commencement in Walbrook, which indicate a prosperous state June 6, 1708, they agreed to establish a prayer-meeting on a Lord_s-day morning before the public work, as convenient and useful. *

(* In June, 1712, it was allowed that those brethren who had opportunity, and whose hearts the Lord should open, might have the use of the little room for prayer every Lord_s day morning before sermon.)

They appointed messengers to converse with a woman that had been deluded by the French prophets, who at this time made a noise in the nation. At the next meeting, July 29, they excluded her from their fellowship, for having left her place in the church a year and a half; for refusing to hearken to frequent admonitions; and _for following those deluded people called the French prophets, whose prophetic speeches, warnings, &c. for want of accomplishment, besides their blasphemous expressions in print and otherwise, are plain proofs that they are not sent of God._ The last entry by Mr. Ebenezer Wilson in the church-book, is on September 5, 1712.

The late Rev. Joshua Thompson, in his manuscripts, speaking of Mr. Wilson, says, _He kept a school at Bristol, and was a man of great learning._ He was an assistant to Mr. Thomas Vauxe; and during the period of his ministry the handsome large meeting-house in Broadmead was built in 1695. He was the son of Mr. John Wilson, pastor of the church at Hitchin, and was educated under the care of the celebrated Mr. Timothy Jollie, at Sheffield, in Yorkshire. On leaving the academy, he was invited to assist Mr. George Fownes, of Bristol, who died in 1685. Mr. Wilson married the daughter of that excellent man; and perhaps, in addition to his labours, in assisting Mr. Vauxe and preaching to the church, he might keep a boarding-school for the support of his family. He attended the Western Association until the year 1704, and after this removed to London, as has been already stated.

Mr. Crosby says, of Mr. Wilson, _Though he was a worthy man, and a scholar, yet he was not a popular preacher; and as the people were but few in number, so they continued: yet he had a tolerable maintenance from them. Some of them being rich, and he being generally respected, they contributed largely for his support._

Mr. Wilson died in 1714, and his funeral sermon was preached, but not published, by the Rev. Edward Wallin. He left behind him a widow and seven children, one of whom was Mr. Samuel Wilson, afterwards the respectable pastor of the church in Prescott-street, Goodman_s-fields. In the funeral sermon for Mr. Samuel Wilson, by Dr. Gill, he says, _He was the son of the Rev. Ebenezer Wilson, a worthy minister of Christ in this city._

After the death of Mr. Ebenezer Wilson, the church left Walbrook, and in June, 1716, went to Turners_-hall.

A History of the English Baptists

Comprising the principal events of the History of Protestant Dissenters, from the Revolution in 1668 till 1760; and of the London Baptist Churches during that period.

By Joseph Ivimey

1823

London: Printed for B. J. Holdsworth
18, St. Paul,s Church-Yard

[*Note from the publisher.* This valuable out-of-print book was carefully typed and formatted for electronic publication by Way of Life Literature. For a catalog of other books, both current and old, in print and electronic format, contact us at P.O. Box 610368, Port Huron, MI 48061-0368. , 866-295-4143 (toll free), fbns@wayoflife.org (e-mail), <http://www.wayoflife.org/> (web site).]

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VOLUME III.

BOOK 1.

Preface.

Strada, describing the qualifications of an historian, says, _To execute the office well, the writer should belong to no country, no order of men, no party, and no religion._ The Writer of this History makes no pretensions to such qualifications. He is an *Englishman*, who venerates the excellent and liberal constitution settled at the period of the glorious Revolution in 1688; he is a *Protestant*, who admires the principles of the Reformation; he is a *dissenter*, who claims the right of private judgment in matters of religion, and who rejoices that this right is recognized and confirmed by the Act of Toleration; he is a *Baptist* who rejects Paedobaptism, because he considers it an unscriptural innovation; and he is a *Calvinist*, who glories in the doctrines of free grace as exhibited in the gospel, because no one owes more to sovereign grace, or expects more from it, than himself. It has afforded him real gratification in collecting the loyal and constitutional addresses which have been presented to the throne by the General Body of Dissenting ministers in London, to find that the Baptists have always been most prompt and zealous in giving proof of their solicitude for the Protestant Succession, their attachment to the princes of the House of Hanover, and their veneration for the principles of English law, which guarantee equal civil rights, and the inalienable privilege of religious liberty.

The most remarkable period of that part of the history now brought under review, in relation to Protestant Dissenters, is the latter part of Queen Anne's reign, when God wrought a great deliverance for them. Since that part of the volume was printed off, the author has met with a paper in relation to the conduct of the Dissenters, which was written in London in the year 1712, and extensively dispersed throughout Great Britain and Ireland. As he has not seen it noticed in any history of Dissenters, and as it is too valuable to be lost or unknown, he has introduced it into the Preface. It is entitled, _A serious Call from the City to the Country, to join with them in setting apart some Time, viz. From Seven to Eight, every Tuesday Morning, for solemn Seeking of God, each one in his closet, now in this so critical a juncture; Jonah i. 6.—Call upon thy God, if so be that God will think upon us, that we perish not._

The following is an extract:—

_You have formerly been called upon to the like duty, and have complied with it; and that not without success. It is now thought highly seasonable to renew the call. It is hoped that you will not be more backward, when it is so apparent that there is even greater need. It is scarce imaginable how a professing people should stand in greater need

of prayer, than we do this day. You were formerly addressed from that very pertinent text, Zech. 8:21,—*The inhabitants of one city shall go to another, saying, Let us go speedily, and pray before the Lord, (or as the marginal reading, more expressive of the original reading, is,) continually, from day to day, to seek the face of the Lord.* According to this excellent pattern, we of this city, the metropolis of our land, think ourselves obliged to call upon our brethren in Great Britain and Ireland, at a time when our hearts cannot but meditate terror, and our flesh tremble for fear of God, and are afraid of his righteous judgments. Those past being for the most part forgotten, and the signs of the times foreboding evil to come, being by the generality little, if at all, regarded, we cannot but renew our earnest request, that all who make conscience of praying for the peace of Jerusalem—who wish well to Zion—who would have us and our posterity a nation of British Protestants, and not of popish bigots and French slaves—would give us, (as far as real, and not pretended necessity will give leave,) a meeting at the throne of grace, at the hour mentioned; there to wrestle with God, for the turning away his anger from us; for deliverance from the hands of his and our enemies; for the turning the councils of all Ahithophels, at home and abroad, into foolishness; for mercy to the Queen and kingdom; for a happy peace or successful war, as long as the matter shall continue undetermined; for securing the protestant succession in the illustrious House of Hanover, (by good and evil wishes to which, the friends and enemies of our civil and religious rights are so essentially distinguished;) and especially for the influences of divine grace upon the rising generation, particularly the seed of the righteous, that the offspring of our Christian heroes may never be the plague and curse of our country. And we desire that this solemn prayer be begun the first Tuesday after sight, and continued at least the summer of this present year, 1712. And we think that a modest, reasonable, and just request, such as this, should not on any account be denied us; since we are not laying a burden on others, to which we will not most willingly put our own shoulders; nay, indeed, count it much more a blessing than a burden. We hope this will not be esteemed, by serious Protestants of any denomination, a needless step; much less do we fear being censured by any such, as fanciful and melancholy, on account of such a proposal. We, with them, believe in a Providence, and know and acknowledge that our God is a God hearing prayer. Scripture recordeth, and our age is not barren of, instances of God's working marvelous deliverances for his people, in answer to humble, believing, and importunate prayer; especially when prayer and reformation go together, which is what we desire. Let this counsel be acceptable to us in this day of the church's calamity, and our common fears. Let us *seek the Lord while he may be found, and call upon him while he is near.* Let us humble ourselves under the mighty hand of God. Let us go and pray unto our God, and he will hearken unto us. We shall seek him and find him, when we shall search for him with all our hearts. Pray for the peace of Jerusalem: they shall prosper that love her. And may Zion's friends and enemies both cry out with wonder, when they see the work of God, *Behold, they pray!—What hath God wrought? Verily there is a God that judgeth in the earth.*

P.S. It is desired and hoped, that if any are hindered from attending this work at the above-mentioned hour, they will nevertheless, set apart a hour weekly for it. _ *

(* I am not acquainted whether this Address was published or not at the time, or whether it was even printed. I have copied it from a little work by Dr. Jonathan

Edwards, of America, in 1747, entitled, *"An Humble Attempt to Promote Explicit Agreement, and Visible Union,"* &c. p. 159,160.)

Such was the spirit which animated the general body of Dissenters in London, when such men as a Williams and a Tong took the lead among the Presbyterians, a Watts and a Bradbury among the Independents, and a Stennett and a Piggott among the Baptists. The history will shew how God mercifully and wonderfully heard their extraordinary and united prayers, and by an event as singular as unexpected, *pulled*, as it were, *his hand, even his right hand, out of his bosom*, and preserved the Protestant Interest in Great Britain and Ireland, and in all probability in Europe, from overwhelming devastation and ruin.

The Writer is delighted to have been able to prove that the Baptists, as a denomination, have steadily opposed the profane practice of occasional communion with the established church, for obtaining offices in the state, by the principles which they have propagated upon that subject, and by condemning the conduct of those who have fallen into that disgraceful and wicked practice.

Nor has it been less pleasing to exhibit facts of their readiness to promote benevolent institutions, both in their own churches, and in connection with their brethren of other denominations. Of the former, the Baptist Fund for the relief of poor ministers, and for the education of students for the ministry, is sufficient evidence; and of the latter the establishment of the *"Widow's Fund"*, and *"The Society for Promoting religious Knowledge among the Poor,"* afford full proof. The Writer hopes he may have furnished matter that will prevent, in future, the slander that has been commonly heaped upon the Baptists, as *"the most sectarian of sects, the most entrenched and fortified in the narrow circle of its communion;"* an assertion this, not only destitute of evidence, but in opposition to the whole tenour of their history. The following quotation from a popular Dissenting publication affords proof of the narrow sectarian feelings of the anonymous writer towards the Baptists:—

"Nor is it a little remarkable that the first demonstration of an awakened zeal should have been made by that which has been esteemed, and not without reason, the most sectarian of sects, the most entrenched and fortified in the narrow circle of its communion,—the Baptists. To them, next to the Moravians, is due the merit of having, as a body, broken new ground, and set the example to the Christian world, of invading the inmost territories of the prince of darkness." *

(* *Eclectic Review* for August, 1822, p. 123.)

It is a fact which cannot be disproved, and which ought to be universally known, that the Baptists first understood the principles of unrestricted religious liberty—that they were the first to propagate them—and that they have never violated them by abridging others of the liberty which they claimed for themselves. *

(* For proof of this the Writer refers to vol. I. p. 124, of this history. The works of Mr. Roger Williams, in reply to the Reverend Mr. Cotton, of Boston; and, above all, the charter he obtained for the state of Rhode Island, present irrefragable evidence, that as he had learned the sentiment from the English Baptists, so he was the first who effectually and practically taught it to the world.)

It is singular, too, that this should be admitted by a Roman Catholic writer, whilst it is always kept out of sight by Dissenting Paedobaptists! Mr. Charles Butler, in his

Historical Memoirs of the English Catholics, says, *It is observable, that this denomination of Christians, [the Baptists,] now truly respectable, but in their origin as little intellectual as any, first propagated the principles of religious liberty.* Vol. I. p. 325.

Notwithstanding the notoriety of this fact, even the Rev. Mr. Brookes, author of a work on religious liberty, has asserted, but without a shadow of evidence, that the Independents first propagated these principles. It is well known that the great Dr. John Owen did not understand the subject, even *theoretically*, and that the Independents of America of that period denied it *practically*.

That the Baptist churches in general have restricted membership and communion at the Lord's table to those who have been baptized by immersion, on a personal profession of faith, is undoubtedly true; and if they have acted in this way without reasons drawn from the sole authority of Christ in his church, they cannot be shielded from the charge of sectarianism. But even in this, the most obnoxious of their principles, wherein do they differ from the conduct of all established, as well as of all congregational churches? Do not they also maintain, that baptism is an indispensable pre-requisite to communion at the Lord's table? If this then be sectarian, they are not more sectarian than other sects, though they have probably acted more consistently with their avowed opinions. But let the Baptists be tried upon this charge without prejudice being retained against them; let truth and candour be heard on their side, and impartiality pronounce the verdict. When did they object to unite with other Christians in any plan of humanity and benevolence, whether for the education of the poor, or the circulation of the Scriptures, or anything in religion which did not exact from them the sacrifice of principles conscientiously held, and, as they think, scripturally proved? Had the Reviewer considered this, all his surprise at their *awakened zeal* would have been prevented, nor would his *hard speeches* have been even uttered.

If proof be demanded for these assertions, let the querist consult the names of the first and the most active members of the *Sunday School Society*, the *Religious Tract Society*, the *British and Foreign Bible Society*, the *British and Foreign School Society*, the Societies for the Conversion of Sailors, &c. and he will find that the Baptists have been *a whit behind the chief* of those who have set the fairest examples of enlightened zeal, Christian candour, and philanthropic benevolence. If an appeal to incontrovertible facts be final, there can be no doubt that the decision on this question may be considered as for ever settled.

It has been a painful employment to narrate the history of some churches once numerous and prosperous, till the *candlestick* was removed out of its place; till *Ichabod*, the glory is departed, was written upon the doors, and this, because the ark of God had been removed. In most instances, the extinction of these societies arose from their ministers having departed from the orthodox doctrines of the Trinity, the proper divinity of the Son of God, and of the Holy Spirit, &c.; and in others, it appears to have proceeded from the non-application of the invitations of the gospel to unconverted hearers of the gospel; and in many cases, to the non-observance of strict scriptural discipline.

In describing the sentiments opposed to the doctrine of the Trinity, &c. he has employed the term Socinian, not for the mean purpose of reproach, but because, at the period to which this work refers, the modern term Unitarian had not been claimed by Socinians, as that which distinguished them from other Christians. The folly, to say nothing of the

arrogance, of this assumption, will appear to all who admit that Trinitarians are also Unitarians; for though they believe there are three divine and equal persons in the Deity, they believe in, and worship, not three Gods, but one God only.

The writer has made some strong and pointed extracts from the works of Baptist authors in defence of their distinguishing tenets, and he is not aware that he ought to offer any apology for this, as he fully accords in the general sentiment expressed by them,—that infant baptism can plead no higher authority than other religious ceremonies which are acknowledged to be of mere human invention.

The reader will find also, that he has expressed himself strongly respecting what he considers the false Calvinism which obtained very generally in the London Baptist churches during the period of which he has written, and the departure of some from the spirit and principles of the *Confession of Faith*, *

(* The confession of faith, often referred to in this work, was first printed in 1677. To it were prefixed an Address to the Reader, and an Appendix, both of which are printed in vol. I. p. 420-429. It was adopted by the General Assembly in 1689, and signed by thirty-seven pastors, in the name and behalf of the whole Assembly. The General Assembly which met in London from June the sixth to the twelfth, 1693, resolved, That the confession of faith of all the baptized churches, of the last impression, be translated into Latin with all convenient speed. There is no proof that this resolution was ever carried into effect.

This confession consists of forty-two articles, and is most earnestly recommended as containing a form of sound words. Quoting the language of the ministers who originally signed it, the Writer adds, Which confession we own, as containing the doctrines of our faith and practice; and do desire that the members of our churches respectively do furnish themselves therewith.—It may be had at Offor's, 44, Newgate-street, price 1s.)

Which are equally removed from the Arminian and the Antinomian creeds; securing all the glory of salvation to the riches of distinguishing grace, and teaching those who have believed in God to be careful to maintain good works. Although he venerates the piety of the eminent men by whom this error was introduced and propagated, he has felt it his duty to expose the baneful tendency of their principles. He is happy to think, on this subject, with those useful and distinguished ministers, the Stennetts and the Wallins, *

(* When the work was nearly finished, the writer discovered, in *Bachus's History of America*, some excellent letters of the Rev. Edward Wallin, and of Thomas Hollis, Esq. Written to ministers in America during the years 1726-1730. These must appear in the next volume.)

a Keach, a Piggott, and a Gifford; and he feels persuaded, had their manner of preaching been universal, the churches would not have suffered the decline which evidently appears to have taken place in numbers and in zeal, towards the close of the reign of George II. To render the work profitable for spiritual edification, large extracts have been made from the biographical sketches given of eminent Christians, both men and women, in their printed funeral sermons. It was considered that these examples of a *conversation becoming the Gospel of Christ*, would operate as a powerful stimulus to the reader to imitate their *work of faith*, their *patience of hope*, and their *labour of love*. For the

purpose, too, of showing the spirit and talents of those who once had the rule over our churches in London, extracts have been made from their works, many of which are now become very scarce, with a view at once to exhibit the end of their conversation, and to hold them up as examples of theological accuracy, and evangelical ardour in the cause of their divine Master. It is hoped that the principles and zeal of a Keach, of a Piggott, and of others of a similar character, will live again in the ministers of all our churches. In compiling this Volume, the Author has made great use of the *_History and Antiquities of the Dissenting Churches in London,_* by Walter Wilson, Esq. A gentleman who, by his indefatigable labours in collecting, by his skill in arranging such multifarious materials, and by the candour which he has generally manifested, has rendered an invaluable service to the whole body of Dissenters,—a service which they have now lost the opportunity of properly acknowledging, as they have left the disinterested author to suffer a large pecuniary loss through the want of purchasers of his excellent work. The fourth volume of Crosby's History has supplied many of the materials. *

(* After the appearance of the First Volume of Crosby's Work, the Rev. John Lewis, of Margate, published his *_History of the Anabaptists,_* &c. making some unjust reflections upon the Author. Mr. Crosby replied to this in a suitable spirit, and with great ability. This work, which is creditable to the Author, is very scarce.)

The Author acknowledges, with sentiments of great respect, the kindness of the Managers of the Baptist Fund, and of the Widow's Fund, in permitting him to use their records; while he expresses his ardent wish, that what he has published respecting those beneficial societies may tend to procure for them a still larger share of the public countenance and support. The minutes of the Society of London Calvinistic Ministers have rendered him considerable assistance, and will be further useful in reference to the history of the country churches. The minutes preserved at the Red Cross-street Library, of the proceedings of the General Body of the Three Denominations, were open to his use; though, he regrets to say, he was refused access to the manuscripts, which he had always considered as being *held in trust* only, for the use of the whole body of Protestant Dissenters. He acknowledges also his obligations to those Ministers, and others of the Denomination, who have rendered him assistance, by lending him church records, or scarce books:—to the Reverend Timothy Thomas, and the Rev. Dr. Evans, of Islington; the Rev. Thomas Hutchins, pastor of the church in Unicorn-yard; the Rev. Thomas Edmunds, of Leominster; and to Messrs. Thomas George, of Greek-street; William Paxon, of Grey's Inn Lane; Benjamin Coxhead, of Tooley-street; Job Heath, of the Borough; Edwards, of Lyme; and Booth, of Coventry.

The writer has not considered it necessary always to quote his authorities for minute circumstances, though he has generally done so. He trusts it will be sufficient to say, that when he has had an opportunity, he has consulted the authorities to which other writers have referred; and for what he has selected from manuscripts, he has no doubt of the confidence of the public in believing that he has quoted them fairly, without keeping back anything essential to the history of any church or individual, and without having tortured anything, to make it serve any particular purpose, or to speak a sectarian language. It would be false modesty did he not thus own, that he has felt encouraged by the testimonies of affectionate approbation which the former Volumes have obtained from those whose good opinion is worth possessing. He has spared neither time nor expense, in

attempting to make the present Volume worthy the acceptance of the Denomination whose history it records, and to whose use it is dedicated: and though they will find but few things which the men of the world would consider honourable and distinguishing, they will meet with nothing of which a Christian need be ashamed; but, on the contrary, much to fill them with honest self-gratification, that they are descended from those who steadily made the word of God their rule, and the glory of God the end of their actions. The Writer intended to include in this Volume, sketches of the history of the Baptist churches in the different counties of England, and he feels much obliged by the communications sent him, by many of his brethren, for that purpose. The proposed limits of the Volume, however, would not admit of this; nor even of all he had written of the London churches; as he has been compelled to defer a full and impartial account of the church in Paul's-alley, and sketches of the churches in Pennington-street, Virginia-street, Ratcliffe Highway; Paul's, Shadwell; Glass-house-street and Grafton-street; Deptford; Sabbatarian, Mill-yard; Petticoat-lane; Embroiderers'-hall and Brown's-hall; Jewin-street and Red Cross-street; and of the churches of the Six Principles, to the next volume. Several pages more than proposed have been added to make the present Volume as complete as possible, and he has even now been obliged to leave out of the history of the church in Little Wild-street, the biographies of Mr. John Taylor, Mr. Samuel Burch, and Allen Evans, Esq.

It is his intention to publish two more Volumes. The Fourth will be compiled of materials which relate to the remainder of the London churches, and of the country churches, during the period of the present Volume. The history of the Western Association, from its commencement, in 1653, and of the Bristol Education Society, will form some of its most prominent features. The Fifth Volume, to comprise all the leading events of the denomination, both in London and the country, from 1760 till 1820. The history of the first twenty-eight years of the Baptist Missionary Society, with the histories of the academies at Bristol, Stepney, and Bradford, and of the Baptist Irish Society, and the Baptist Home Missionary Society, will be introduced and fully narrated. The intimate connection of the Author with the committees of several of these institutions, will enable him to execute this part of his Work, in a great measure, from personal knowledge. He could not satisfy himself in concluding this preface, without mentioning the very essential aid he has derived, and by which his labours have been greatly relieved, from the literary help afforded him by his friend, Mr. John Satchell, of Islington, whose kindness is hereby gratefully acknowledged.

That these records of ministers and private Christians, may become a means of propagating the spirit and principles of pure and undefiled religion, and of unsophisticated and primitive Christianity; and that this attempt to promote the glory of the Saviour by the weakest of his public servants, may be graciously accepted, and rendered subservient to the furtherance of his cause, *to whom be glory for ever and ever*, is the humble and sincere prayer of the unworthy Author.

JOSEPH IVIMEY

Harpur-street, Dec. 10, 1822

BOOK 1.

CHAP. I.

REIGN OF KING WILLIAM III.

1688-1702

The happy Revolution of 1688 was a glorious era in the annals of the English nation. Without the shedding of blood, through the steady and persevering zeal of protestant patriots in opposing popery and tyranny, the nation found itself in possession of religious and civil liberty, procured for them by their illustrious deliverer, and guaranteed by a wise and equitable constitution.

William, Prince of Orange, followed by a band of men whose hearts God had touched, landed at Torbay Nov. 5. That memorable day *was as the light of the morning when the sun riseth, even a morning without clouds; as the tender grass springing out of the earth by clear shining after rain:* and he, who *putteth down kings and setteth up kings*, sent one to govern the nation who appeared to be actuated by that divine principle, *He that ruleth over men must be just, ruling in the fear of God.*

An event of this nature could not fail to be gratifying to the protestant Dissenters, whose lives had been rendered miserable by the heavy bondage of the two former reigns. They embraced the first convenient opportunity to express the gladness of their hearts, and on Wednesday, Jan. 2, 1688-9, about ninety Nonconformiist Ministers *

(* The author of The Life of King William, says,—that go under the names of *Presbyterial* and *Congregational*.—There can be no doubt but the latter term included the Baptists, in relation to their principles of church government.)

attended his Highness the Prince of Orange at St. James's, being introduced by the Earl of Devonshire, the Lord Wharton, and the Lord Wiltshire; when *one* of their Ministers, says my Author *addressed his Highness to the following effect,—That they professed their grateful sense of his Highness's hazardous and heroical expedition, which the favour of heaven had made so surprisingly prosperous, &c.*

1689: Address of the Dissenters to King William III

—That they esteemed it a common felicity, that the worthy patriots of the nobility and gentry of this kingdom had unanimously concurred with his Highness's design, by whose most prudent advice, the administration of public affairs was developed in this critical juncture, into hands, which the nation and the world knew to be apt for the greatest undertakings, and so suitable to the present exigency of our case.

—That they promised the utmost endeavour, which in their stations they were capable of affording, for promoting the excellent and most desirable ends for which his Highness had declared.

—That they added their continual and fervent prayers to the Almighty, for the preservation of his Highness's person, and the success of his future endeavours for the defence and propagation of the protestant interest throughout the Christian world.

—That they should all most willingly have chosen that for the season of paying their respects to his Highness, when the Lord Bishop and Clergy of London attended his Highness for that purpose, (which some of them did, and which his lordship was pleased condescendingly to make mention of to his Highness,) had their notice of that intended

application been so early as to make their more general attendance possible to them at that time.

_That therefore, though they now appeared in a distinct company, they did not on a distinct account, but on that only which was common to them and all protestants.

That there were some of eminent note, whom age or present infirmities hindered from coming with them, yet who concurred in the same grateful sense of our common deliverance.

His Highness was pleased very favourably to receive this application, and to assure them,

That he came purposely for the defence of the protestant religion, and that it was his own religion, wherein he was born and bred; the religion of his country, and of his ancestors; that he was resolved, by the grace of God, to adhere to it, and to do his utmost endeavours for the defence of it, and the promoting of a firm union among protestants. *

(* *Life of King William*, p. 169, 170. Third edition, London, 1705.)

On Feb. 6, the Prince and Princess of Orange, after swearing to rule according to the Act of Settlement, were declared King and Queen of England, to the great joy of all true protestants.

King William and Queen Mary were no sooner seated on the throne, than the Dissenting Ministers of the three denominations, in and about the cities of London and Westminster, waited on their Majesties with an address of congratulation. Dr. Bates was selected to present it, who made the two following speeches.

1689: Address to the King and Queen on their Acceptance of the Act of Settlement.

TO THE KING

_May it please your Majesty,

_The series of successful events which has attended your glorious enterprise for the saving of these kingdoms from so imminent and destructive evils, has been so eminent and extraordinary, that it may force an acknowledgement of the Divine Providence from those who deny it, and cause admiration in all who believe and reverence it. The beauty and speed of this happy work are the bright signatures of His hand, who creates deliverance for his people. The less of human power, the more of Divine wisdom and goodness has been conspicuous in it. If the deliverance had been obtained by fierce and bloody battles, victory itself had been dejected and sad, and our joy had been tinged with afflicting bitterness.

But as the sun, ascending the horizon, dispels without noise the darkness of the night; so your serene presence has, without tumults and disorders, chased away the darkness that invaded us. In the sense of this astonishing deliverance, we desire, with all possible ardency of affection, to magnify the glorious name of God, the author of it, by whose entire efficacy the means have been successful and we cannot without a warm rapture of thankfulness recount our obligations to your Majesty, the happy instrument of it. Your illustrious greatness of mind in an undertaking of so vast expense, your heroic zeal in exposing your most precious life in such an adventurous expedition, your wise conduct and unshaken resolution in prosecuting your great ends, are above the loftiest flights of language, and exceed all praise. We owe to your Majesty the two greatest and most valuable blessings that we can enjoy; –the preservation of the true religion, our most sacred treasure, –and the recovery of the falling state, and the establishing of it upon just foundations.

According to our duty, we promise unfeigned fidelity and true allegiance to your Majesty's person and government. We are encouraged by your gracious promise upon our first address, humbly to desire and hope, that your Majesty will be pleased by your wisdom and authority to establish a firm union of your protestant subjects in matters of religion, by making the rule of Christianity to be the rule of conformity. Our blessed union in the purity and peace of the Gospel, will make this church a fair and lovely type of heaven, and terrible to our antichristian enemies. This will make England the steady centre from which a powerful influence will be derived for the support of reformed Christianity abroad. This will bring immortal honour to your name, above the trophies and triumphs of the most renowned conquerors. We do assure your Majesty, that we shall cordially embrace the terms of union which the ruling wisdom of our Saviour has prescribed in his word. We shall not trespass further on your royal patience, but shall offer up our fervent prayers to the King of kings, that he will please to direct your Majesty by his unerring wisdom, and always incline your heart to his glory, and encompass your sacred person with his favour as with a shield, and make your government a universal blessing to these kingdoms.

1689 Friendship of the King Towards Dissenters

To which his Majesty was graciously pleased to return the following answer,
I take kindly your good wishes, and whatever is in my power shall be employed for obtaining such a union among you. I do assure you of my protection and kindness.
Having addressed his Majesty in this manner, and received his kind answer, Dr. Bates then addressed the Queen in these terms.

May it please your Majesty,

Your happy arrival into your native country, and accession to the crown, have diffused a universal joy through this kingdom. It is an auspicious sign of public felicity, where supreme virtue and supreme dignity meet in the same person, Your inviolable firmness in the profession of the truth, and your exemplary piety, are the most radiant jewels in your crown, The lustre of your conversation, unstained in the midst of tempting vanities, and adorned with every grace, recommends religion as the most honourable quality, even to those who are averse from hearing sermons, and apt to despise serious instructions, and excitations to be religious. We humbly desire that your Majesty would be pleased, by your wisdom and goodness, to compose the differences between your protestant subjects in things of less moment concerning religion. We hope those reverend persons who conspire with us in the main end, the glory of God and the public good, will consent to the terms of the union, wherein all the reformed churches agree. We shall sincerely address our request to God, that he will please to pour down in a rich abundance His blessing upon your Majesty's person and government, and preserve you to his heavenly kingdom.

The answer which her Majesty gave them was as follows:

I will use all endeavors for the obtaining of a union that is necessary for the edifying of the church. I desire your prayers. *

(* *Life of King William*, p. 202,203; and Neal's *History of the Puritans*, vol. iv. P. 606, 608.)

This excellent monarch had discovered even personal friendship towards some of the dissenting ministers *;

(* *Life of King William*, p. 383.)

–the celebrated Mr. Fleming, author of *The Apocalyptic Key*;–the great John Howe, of Silver Street;–and Dr. Daniel Williams, who gave the Dissenters_ Library, &c. in Red Cross Street;–and also, it is probable Mr. Joseph Stennett, of Pinners_ Hall. There were none of his Majesty_s subjects who formed a more exalted opinion of the King_s worth,–who were more grateful to God for the deliverance wrought by him from popery and tyranny,–and who were more duly sensible of their obligations for the shield of protection which the King had ever held over them.

The good will which the King manifested towards the protestant Dissenters was well known, and excited the jealousy and envy of their enemies; who, by their influence in parliament, contrived to prevent the intentions of the King towards them from being carried into effect; viz. that the dissenters should, in common with all his protestant subjects, be rendered eligible to every post of honour and immunity in the state. It was the King_s wish, that the Test and Corporation Acts, so far as they related to protestant Dissenters, should be removed; but this he could not accomplish: nor was even the Act of Toleration obtained without considerable difficulty. *

1689: The Passing of the Act of toleration

(* This Act was entitled, _An Act for exempting their Majesties_ protestant subjects, dissenting from the Church of England, from the penalties of certain laws._ The preamble runs thus; _Forasmuch as some ease to scrupulous consciences in the exercise of religion may be an effectual means to unite their Majesties_ protestant subjects in interest and affection._

The enactments of this just and gracious Act, though they did not repeal, yet restrained the operation of many persecuting Acts which had passed in former reigns; those in the 23rd, and the 29th, and the 35th of Elizabeth, and the 30th of Charles II.; but it excepted those of the 25th and the 30th of Charles II.. The conditions were that certain oaths be taken, and the declaration registered. It enacted also that their meetings for worship should be public.

This act also exempted ministers from the penalties of the Five Mile Act, and the Act of Uniformity, passed in the reign of Charles II. On the condition that they took the prescribed oaths; that this declaration was registered; that they subscribed the Articles of the Church of England, with the exception of two Articles in favour of the Presbyterians, of three in favour of the Independents, and of three and a half in favour of the Baptists. It exempted ministers from serving civil offices. In addition to the Oath of Allegiance, they were required to subscribe the following declaration.

I, A. B. profess faith in God the Father, and in Jesus Christ his eternal Son, the true God, and in the Holy Spirit, one God blessed forevermore; and do acknowledge the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments to be given by divine inspiration._

It enacted also that persons disturbing a congregation meeting in a registered place of worship, should be liable, on conviction, to a fine of twenty pounds, and imprisonment in default of payment.)

Many are the proofs which could be produced of the truth of these remarks during the reign of this excellent monarch, to whose wise and powerful protection they were indebted for the uninterrupted liberty they had enjoyed. On several public occasions addresses were presented to the king by them as separate bodies. On the event of his

Majesty's being preserved from the assassination plot in 1696, planned by the Tories and Jacobites, and encouraged by Louis XIV, an address, written by the Rev. Joseph Stennett, was presented on behalf of the Baptists. This was on April 9, 1696, when Mr. Stennett was introduced to the King by the illustrious warrior, the Right Honourable Charles Mordaunt, the third Earl of Peterborough, and the first Earl of Monmouth. This address excited a great deal of public attention, and was doubtless calculated to raise the Baptists in the estimation of his Majesty and the Court, who knew how to appreciate the unbought suffrages of men, that had always steadily opposed the measures of the Tory and Jacobite party. The following is the Address:—

1696: Address of the Baptists to the King on the Defeat of the Assassination Plot

TO THE KING'S MOST EXCELLENT MAJESTY.

The humble address of the Ministers of the Baptist Denomination in and about the City of London, in behalf of themselves, and their respective Congregations.

May it please your Majesty,

After having paid the grateful tribute of our humble thanks at the throne of the King of kings, for that signal favour wherewith his providence has blessed your Majesty, these your kingdoms, and the whole protestant interest abroad, in the seasonable discovery and defeat of the late barbarous conspiracy of the blood-thirsty enemies of your Majesty's government and life,—a life highly endeared to us by the many successive dangers to which your Majesty has so generously exposed it in the defence of all that is valuable to us, and by those remarkable instances of the divine protection by which it has been as often guarded; we your Majesty's most loyal and obedient subjects; with all becoming respect, beg leave to congratulate your Majesty on this so eminent and happy deliverance.

And we gladly embrace this occasion to assure your Majesty, that as we have enjoyed a share of the benign influences of your government, whereby both our *civil and religious liberties* have been so happily preserved and vindicated; so we shall make it our glory (as we account it our duty) to render your Majesty the utmost service we are capable of, in that sphere wherein the law allows us to move. And as a farther testimony of our fidelity and affection to your Majesty's person and government, we cheerfully follow the pattern of the honorable the House of Commons, in subscribing the association subjoined to this our humble address. Nor shall we cease to offer our fervent supplications to heaven, that the spirit of wisdom may continue to direct all your Majesty's councils that the Lord of hosts may still succeed your army, that troops of associate angels may always guard your royal person; that your Majesty may have a long and prosperous reign on earth, and at length wear a crown of immortal glory in the kingdom of heaven. So pray,

Great Sir,

Your Majesty's most loyal

And most dutiful Subjects

And Servants.

1696: Sermon of the Rev. J. Piggott

The Rev. Mrs. John Piggott, one of the London ministers, took advantage of the public day of thanksgiving, April 16, 1696, for the discovery and defeat of the late detestable conspiracy against his Majesty's person, and of a designed invasion from France, to preach a sermon, which he afterwards published, with the title of *A good king and his people the special care of heaven;* from Psalm 144:10, *It is he that giveth salvation unto*

kings; who delivereth David his servant from the hurtful sword. To the discourse is prefixed a dedicatory epistle, _To the Right Honourable Charles Earl of Monmouth, *

(* The Earl of Monmouth was a grandson of that excellent lady, the Countess of Peterborough, who was the constant friend and patroness of Archbishop Usher. This nobleman was the first person who advised the Prince of Orange to come over to England.)

CHAP. II.

REIGN OF QUEEN ANNE

17021714

The sorrow occasioned to the protestant Dissenters by the death of their friend and protector, the good King William, was in some good degree removed by the hopes that were entertained, that his successor, who had been educated in protestant principles, would imitate her pious and illustrious sister, the late Queen Mary. They rejoiced that the _suppositious heir_ was prevented from coming to the throne by the last act of the late King_s political life, which secured the crown in the line of the protestant succession. The Queen too had made a solemn pledge that she would _make the principles of the Act of Settlement the rule of her government, and the measures of her predecessor the model of her character._

The protestant Dissenting Ministers, of the three denominations in London, presented an Address of congratulation to the Queen on March 18, 1701-2.

The following notice of this event was given in the London Gazette of March 19. _Mr. Daniel Williams, with the rest of the protestant Dissenting Ministers, in and about the city of London, viz. Presbyterians, Independents and Baptists, waited on her Majesty, in a body, with an humble Address._

1702: Address to the Queen on her Accession to the Throne.

This address was printed March 23, and is as follows:

_To her most Excellent Majesty Anne, by the Grace of God, Queen of England, Scotland, France, and Ireland, Defender of the Faith, &c.

_Most Gracious Sovereign,

_We your Majesty_s most loyal and dutiful subjects, the protestant Dissenting Ministers in and about the city of London, crave leave humbly to represent the deep sense we have of the unspeakable loss we and all your Majesty_s good subjects suffer by the death of our late glorious Monarch, William the Third.

_But herein we are most sensibly and effectually relieved by your Majesty_s most happy and peaceable succession to these crowns, whose rightful and undoubted title we acknowledge with the greatest sincerity, and whose constant zeal for the protestant religion is so justly renowned: for all which, with unfeigned joy, we bless and adore the Divine goodness.

We further beg leave to assure your Majesty of our most dutiful affection and inviolable fidelity to your royal person and government; not doubting of our share in the many

blessings of your Majesty_s wise and happy reign, which we heartily pray may be long over us._

Judging from the manner in which this Address is printed in the Gazette, we should conclude that the Queen_s reign commenced without any appearances of grace and favour towards the protestant Dissenters. The Queen gave no reply to their dutiful and loyal Address, not even the assurance that she would take them under her gracious protection. What was the cause of this cold and distant treatment does not appear: their Address was not perhaps sufficiently laudatory; or it might have been considered convenient to depress the hopes which they had been encouraged to exercise from the favour of the late Monarch.

It seems that the Baptists were not deficient in loyalty and zeal at this period. Mr. John Piggott, in the sermon mentioned in the last chapter, thus delivers his sentiments upon the accession of the Queen, whom he calls that _admirable Princess:_ _Let us not,_ says he, _forget to bless God for a protestant Queen, and her peaceable accession to the throne. This excellent Princess discovered a becoming zeal for the protestant religion, in opposition to popery when she moved in a lower orb: we have just reason, therefore, to expect that her zeal will be as warm and regular now she acts in a more exalted state. And let us not cease to pray for the illustrious Queen Anne, that she may have wisdom as an angel of God, to go in and out before so great a people; that she may be the Deborah of our English Israel, and a nursing mother to all the reformed churches; that she may have a prosperous reign, a long life, a safe government, a secure palace, faithful counsellors, valiant armies, and a loyal people; that she may trample upon the necks of her enemies, and reign in the hearts of her subjects; and that, under the influence of her wise and mild administration, true and undefiled religion may revive and flourish: to which I wish all her majesty_s subjects may as heartily say amen, as do the protestant Dissenters of the three kingdoms._

1704: Victory at Blenheim

The measures pursued by the Queen for the first years of her reign fully justified the hopes which the protestant Dissenters had entertained of her. The victory obtained by the allies under the command of the Duke of Marlborough at Blenheim, was celebrated by a public day of thanksgiving, Sep. 7, 1704. On that occasion Mr. Joseph Stennett and Mr. John Piggott preached and published sermons. From the latter of these an extract or two will be made, in proof of the gratification felt by the Dissenters with the administration of the Queen. Mr. Piggott_s text is, Psalm 150:2. *Praise him for his mighty acts.*

1704: Sermon of Rev. John Piggott

In enumerating the mighty acts of God, the preacher remarks, _Since her Majesty_s happy accession to the throne of these kingdoms, Divine Providence has guarded her royal person, and caused a current of success to attend her arms. It is under her wise administration that we enjoy our civil and religious liberties, peace, plenty, and prosperity at home, while other countries are involved in the miseries of war._

In mentioning the reasons why praise should be offered to God for the late victory, Mr. Piggott states its effects in humbling the pride of the tyrant of France, Louis XIV, and

then says, _What can a protestant nation expect if conquered by papists, whose resentments are deep, and their revenge high, being both excited by superstition? What can we expect less than to be hindered in the exercise of our religion, and to be deprived of our civil rights and properties, than which nothing can be dearer to us, both as Protestants and Englishmen?_ In concluding the sermon the preacher says, _Let us earnestly pray that, as God has begun to humble a haughty tyrant by the hand of woman, so her Majesty may scourge his insolence, and lay all his honour in the dust. May success attend the counsels, and victory the arms, of Queen Anne; may she be the happy instrument of restoring an honourable and lasting peace to Europe; and may her piety transcend that of all her predecessors._

The sermon of Mr. Joseph Stennett on this occasion excited much attention. Some noble person presented a copy of it to the Queen without the knowledge of the author. The Queen having read it was so pleased with it that she ordered a gratuity to be paid him out of the privy purse, to be presented him with her majesty's thanks. This sermon was founded upon Judges 5:31. *So let all thine enemies perish, O Lord; but let them that love him be as the sun when he goeth forth in his might.* We are now assembled, says the preacher, _to look back with joy and gratitude on the late glorious victory it has pleased God to give the confederate arms against those of a great modern tyrant; and from thence to look forward with hope for the like future success against all the enemies of God and his church; and to sing in concert with Deborah, and the rest of the triumphing Israelites, *So let thine enemies perish,*_ &c.

The protestant Dissenting ministers in London had hitherto acted in separate bodies; but at the commencement of this reign they had agreed to form a committee, selected from the general body of approved ministers of the three denominations, in the cities of London and Westminster, and their vicinity. This committee consisted of four Presbyterian, three Independent, and three Baptist ministers, who were chosen by the respective denominations to which they belonged. The Baptists were now admitted to equal distinctions with ministers of the other denominations; and it is highly probable that this arrangement arose, in a considerable degree, from the eminence to which some of their ministers had been raised in the public estimation, by their learning and patriotism. Mr. Joseph Stennett was usually on the committees appointed to draw up their addresses to Government. That which was presented to the Queen after the battle of Blenheim was the production of his pen, and was highly commended by the Lord Chancellor Cowper. It was presented to the Queen at Windsor, June 17, 1705, by the Rev. John Spademan, who was introduced by the Lord Treasurer Godolphin.

1705: Address to the Queen.

_TO THE QUEEN'S MOST EXCELLENT MAJESTY.

The humble Address of the Protestant Dissenting Ministers, of the several Denominations in and about the Cities of London and Westminster.

May it please your Majesty,

_The late surprising progress of your Majesty_s forces, and those of your allies in Flanders, under the command of the most illustrious prince the Duke of Marlborough; and of those in Spain, commanded by the noble Earls of Peterborough and Galway, happily supported by your royal navy, under the conduct of your prudent and valiant admirals, engages us humbly to congratulate your Majesty on so glorious an occasion. The signal answer it has pleased God to return to those devout prayers, which your Majesty and your people by your directions addressed to heaven, inspires us with a joy equal to the mortification it gives your enemies. And while your Majesty ascribes your many victories to the arm of the Almighty, and repeats your royal commands to the people, to offer him solemn thanksgivings; we cannot but look on your Majesty_s piety as an hopeful pledge of the like future success.

_As the important consequence of your Majesty_s triumphs make a daily accession to your glory, so they give us an agreeable prospect of the speedy reduction of the power of France to its just limits, the restitution of liberty and peace to Europe, the effectual relief of the reformed churches abroad, and the security of that provision the law has made for the protestant succession to the crown of this kingdom.

_We gratefully acknowledge the share we have in the blessings of your Majesty_s auspicious reign, which preserves to us both our civil and religious liberties; and take this occasion to renew to your Majesty, the assurance of our inviolable fidelity; to which not only our interest and inclination, but the sacred ties of gratitude and conscience oblige us. And we shall use our utmost endeavours, in our several stations, to promote that union and moderation among your protestant subjects, so often recommended by your Majesty as highly necessary to the common safety.

_May the divine Providence, that has made your Majesty not only the head of the protestant interest, but chief in the confederacy for the glorious cause of common liberty, give your Majesty the satisfaction of seeing both more firmly established than ever, by the influence of your counsels, and success of your arms. May your Majesty_s exemplary piety, zeal for the reformation of manners, and parental care of all your people, even of those of remotest colonies, be eminently rewarded by the great God, with the constant prosperity of your government. May your reign be honoured with an happy union of your two kingdoms of Great Britain; may your royal consort the Prince enjoy a confirmed health; may your Majesty continue to reign in the hearts of your people, and be late advanced to a throne of glory in the kingdom of heaven. So pray,

Your Majesty_s most loyal,
Most obedient Subjects
And Servants._

1707: Mr. Stennett s Sermons

On Thursday, June 27, 1706, the day of thanksgiving appointed on account of the late glorious success of her Majesty_s arms, and those of her allies, at Ramillies, Mr. Stennett preached a sermon from Deut. 33:29 This sermon contains an account of that battle, and a recital of the wonderful providences which had appeared in favour of the confederates. He says at the conclusion, _Let us bless God for the great favour he has shown us, on placing her Majesty upon the throne of these kingdoms, under whose happy government we enjoy so many peculiar blessings. Let the eminent rewards of her virtues, by the

victories God has given her, incite us to the imitation of her royal example. Let us continually pray for the happiness and prosperity of her person and government, and contribute all we can to the support of her throne._ Mr. Stennett published another sermon, preached May 1, 1707, the day appointed for a public thanksgiving for the happy Union of England and Scotland which then took place, from Judges 5:15. *For the divisions of Reuben there were great searchings of heart.* The preacher exults on the union as a hopeful pledge of the prosperity of both kingdoms; and after applauding _the prudent conduct of the Queen and her counsellors, and the exact management of her commissioners,_ he thus devoutly prays for the Queen: _May the good providence which has given her the chief honour of breaking the chains of Europe, give her also the satisfaction of seeing its liberty entirely secured, and its peace restored; and the same divine hand that has succeeded her in uniting her protestant subjects at home, make her the glorious instrument of re-establishing the reformed religion abroad. May the union that takes place this day be never dissolved by our follies and sins; may Ephraim never more envy Judah, nor Judah vex Ephraim. May England and Scotland for the future be as much one in inclination and affection, as they are obliged to be by their duty and interest; that what has been solemnly confirmed on earth, may be ratified in heaven, and that what God has joined together no man may put asunder._

Mr. Stennett published another _Sermon, preached February 17, 1708-9, the day appointed by her Majesty for a solemn thanksgiving to Almighty God, for the many and great successes of the confederate arms in the last campaign._ The text was Gen. 14:18-20 After enumerating in a strain of patriotic ardour, the various victories which God had granted to the protestant confederates against Lewis XIV, the French tyrant, Mr. Stennett thus concludes: _And let us offer our fervent prayers to Almighty God for the preservation of her Majesty_s person, the prosperity of her government, the success of her arms, and the support of her royal mind under the great affliction lately befallen her, by the death of the Prince her consort, amidst the triumphs we have been commemorating. Let those who minister in sacred things bless her Majesty in the language of the 20th Psalm; and let all the people say, Amen._

Little did this loyal and elegant preacher think, that the sun which now shone so bright, scattering such beams of glory round the head of her Majesty, was to be so suddenly eclipsed; that her counsels would be so entirely changed; that the instruments by which such successes had been obtained, would be so shamefully rejected; that the protestant Dissenters, who had hitherto shared in the peace and prosperity of her reign, were destined to have the cup of trembling again put into their hand; that persecution in its most insidious form would again stalk through the land; and that, in imitation of the conduct of the Egyptian tyrant, an endeavour should be made to prevent them from multiplying, by abandoning all their little ones either to illiteracy or to infamy. *Put not your trust in princes, nor in the son of man, in whom there is no help.*

1702: State of Baptist Churches in London.

Having introduced the reader to a knowledge of the state of religious liberty which prevailed at this period, we will now glance at the particular history of our churches in the metropolis from the commencement of this reign.

The last few years had made great alterations in the churches of the Baptist denomination in London. Many of their pastors, eminent for age and usefulness, had not been _suffered to continue by reason of death._ It is remarkable that six of the most distinguished of them should have been taken away during the short period of three or four years. These were the venerable Hansard Knollys and William Kiffin; William Collins, Thomas Harrison, Benjamin Dennis, and Hercules Collins. *

(* See the sketches of the characters and labours of these ministers in our second volume.)

It is easy to conceive what an effect the loss of such ministers must have produced: at their deaths all exertion to promote a union of the churches, by means of a general assembly, seem to have been discontinued. While, however, the removal of aged and useful ministers is greatly to be lamented, it has been the occasion of bringing forward other ministers who have proved equally eminent, but who could not have been prominently engaged in conducting the public affairs of our churches, had not death removed their seniors in office.

The union which had subsisted between the churches in London and those of the Western Association, appears to have been dissolved from about the year 1694; but in the year 1702, the Western Churches resolved to stir up the languishing zeal of their brethren in the metropolis. I find that when the Western Association met at Trowbridge, the 26th and 27th of the third month, [June] 1702, it was agreed that _a letter should be drawn up by brother Gifford, brother Davison, and brother Elliot, to be sent from this Association to the churches in London of the same faith and order, to excite them to renew their Association with the churches in the country; and also to think of some proper method to promote the truth and interest of Christ which we profess._

It appears from this document, that in the opinion of the ministers of the Western Association, the churches of London were in so declining a state, as to need an epistle, stirring them up to active zeal in promoting the cause of Christ, and the prosperity of the denomination. It is evident, too, that the dissolution of the union of the London and Western Churches was not owing to any want of affection or zeal in the latter, as they had repeatedly solicited a restoration of their former connection. It is in vain to conjecture what were the reasons that operated with the churches in London to decline a co-operation so earnestly desired; but, so far as appears, no reply was sent to the letter written and prepared by these aged and respectable ministers; at least no notice whatever is taken of this matter in the Breviates of the Association Letters of subsequent years. It is not unlikely, however, that though it did not produce a renewal of the connection with the churches in the West, it excited the ministers in London to attempt the formation of a separate Association of their own churches. Accordingly it appears, that at the beginning of the year 1704, thirteen churches had agreed to form such an Assembly, and to hold their first meeting at Lorimers_ Hall, situated over against the north end of Basinghall Street.

The churches which agreed to form this new Assembly were the following; to which are annexed the names of their pastors and messengers.

1704: Association of London Churches.

1. BROAD-STREET,

* Messrs. John Gardiner, Benjamin Cooper,

- | | |
|----------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| OLD GRAVEL-LANE, WAPPING. | * Benjamin Gander, messengers. |
| 2. PINNER_S HALL. | * Mr. Joseph Stennett, pastor. |
| | * Messrs. Mark Hawkins, John Gee. |
| 3. GOAT-YARD PASSAGE, | * Mr. Benjamin Keach, pastor. |
| HORSELY-DOWN, SOUTHWARK | * Messrs. Benjamin Stinton, |
| | * Joshua Farrow. |
| 4. PENNINGTON-STREET, | * Messrs. Thomas Dawson, Humphry |
| VIRGINIA-STREET. | * Burroughs, Rd. Glover. |
| 5. CHURCH-LANE, LIMEHOUSE. | * Mr. Leonard Harrison, pastor. |
| | * Messrs. Robert Wynn, Stephen |
| | * Bantinck . |
| 6. ARTILLERY-LANE, | * Messrs. Robert Cheney, Lionel |
| SPITALFIELDS. | * Sharp, James Pope. |
| 7. PAUL_S, SHADWELL. | * Mr. Nathaniel Wyles, pastor. |
| | * Messrs. John Brand, Caleb Hooker. |
| 8. DEVONSHIRE-SQUARE | * Mr. Richard Adams, pastor. |
| | * Messrs. Mark Key, John Toms. |
| 9. LITTLE WILD-STREET. | * Mr. John Piggott, pastor. |
| | * Messrs. Richard Aland, Henry |
| | * Clare. |
| 10. BAGNIO-COURT. | * Messrs. John Skinner, Thomas |
| | * Lampett, George Capstaff. |
| 11. COLLIER_S RENTS, | * Mr. Richard Parkes, pastor. |
| WHITE-STREET, SOUTHWARK. | * Messrs. Francis Sims, George |
| | * Coombs. |
| 12. LORIMERS_-HALL. | * Messrs. Richard Bryand, George |
| | * Richardson, Richard Wilkinson. |
| 13. JOINERS_-HALL, | * Mr. Joseph Maisters, pastor, |
| FRIAR_S-LANE, THAMES-ST. | * Messrs. Richard Pain, John Travers. |

There were several other churches in London at this time; why they did not unite in this proposed assembly does not appear. It is not improbable that the old fears lest such a convention should interfere with the congregational order and independency of the churches, again prevented a general union;—an evil this, inseparable, perhaps, from that zeal for the rights of private judgment, which has been always rigidly maintained by our churches. If a larger proportion of mutual confidence had been exercised by brethren of the same sentiments, and a greater share of affection manifested towards sister churches, it would have prevented many of the strifes and divisions that have so lamentably prevailed, to the injury of the Baptist churches; which, in the opinion of the writer, are scripturally constituted, though, he thinks, in very many cases, they have been unscripturally governed.

This association of churches met at Lorimer's Hall, April 17, 1704. At the commencement of the business a sermon was preached by the Rev. John Piggott, from Rom. 14:19 *Let us therefore follow after the things which make for peace, and things whereby one may edify another*. This sermon was afterwards printed; it was entitled, *Union and Peace Recommended*. In the introduction Mr. Piggott remarks, *It is not the business of a faction, but the cause of God in our hands, that I shall attempt to promote. My design is not to stir up strife, but to diffuse the grateful odour of charity, and to recommend union and a good correspondence to the churches of Christ*. In discussing the subject, the preacher remarks, that the union and peace which he recommended must be in conjunction with holiness and truth; with order and distinction. Under the head which relates to *truth*, he says, *Christians may differ in their notions and opinions about those matters which are less clearly revealed, or that are indifferent in their own nature; yet this may be without dividing in our affections, or making any breach in our Christian communion*. Whatever principle in religion strikes at the foundation, forbids our union with those that patronize it; for so far as we unite with such, we countenance error and betray the truth. It is criminal for those who adhere to the doctrine according to godliness, to coalesce with those that are coupled with damnable heresies; that deny the Lord that bought them, and teach for doctrines the commandments of men. He concludes with saying, *that the limits fixed by the apostle should be the bounds for regulating our communion, namely, those only who acknowledge one Lord, one faith, and one baptism*.

1704: Mutual Duties of pastors and Churches.

Under the head which relates to *order and distinction*, there are some correct statements as to the manner in which the discipline of our churches is to be maintained. He says, *Care indeed ought to be taken, that the privileges of the church may be secured, and yet that the power of the pastor be not infringed; and when it is thus, they mutually strengthen and assist each other. It is the work of an elder, not only to feed but to govern. And agreeably hereunto, the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews gives direction to the governed concerning their deportment and behaviour. Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves; for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief; for that is unprofitable for you*. The government which an evangelical pastor is to exercise, must not be despotic and arbitrary, but the church must be governed with her own consent. It is not a stately domination, or an imperious sway, but a ruling by meek persuasion, agreeable to the rules exhibited in divine revelation. What though ordained ministers are called bishops or overseers in the New Testament, yet they are not to lord it over the people's faith, but to act as helpers of their joy. And in what sacred society soever there is a strict regard had to the order and distinction Christ hath fixed in it, there will be mutual endearments betwixt the officers and private members, which will lay a foundation for a lasting union. But when the order of Christ is inverted, and the distinction he has made between the officers and people confounded, and both brought upon the same level, such lie exposed to all the evils of anarchy; for people then will act as the children of Israel when without a king, where every man did that which was right in his own eyes.

The learning and eminence of this worthy minister must have given great weight to the sentiments which were so powerfully and energetically enforced upon this occasion, and have had a strong tendency to produce the union and peace which the Association was designed to accomplish.

1704: Preliminary Articles of the Assembly.

After the sermon was concluded, and the blessing of God had been sought by prayer to rest upon their deliberations, the Rev. Richard Adams was chosen moderator; the letters of the churches were read, submitting different subjects for the discussion and decision of the Assembly; and the following rules were adopted as preliminary regulations.

1. _That what this Assembly shall agree to shall be proposed to the several churches whose messengers are present, only by way of *advice*, and not to be accounted binding to any church, any further than the approbation and consent of such church shall make it so.
2. _That to prevent all interruptions and disorder in debates, every person shall stand up when he speaks, directing his discourse to the moderator; and no other person shall speak till he sits down.
3. _That no opinion, wherein any of the churches represented in this Assembly differ from the rest, shall be controverted in this assembly.
4. _That the several matters recommended to the consideration of this Assembly, by letters from the churches, be considered in the same order in which the letters were received._

The meetings of the Assembly continued for three days, and some opinion may be formed of their proceedings from the result of their deliberations: as also what was the state of the churches to which these decisions were recommended.

1704: Wandering Hearers censured.

From the contiguity of the London churches it is highly necessary that some general rules should be observed respecting the reception of those persons as members, who may have belonged to any other of the churches. The Assembly accordingly resolved, _That it is an irregular practice for one church to receive members from another without recommendation, or at least without sending messengers to the church from which such persons come, in order to their regular dismissal; and that it is the duty of such persons, who desire to be dismissed from one church to another, respectfully to signify their reason or reasons for such a dismissal, to the church to which they belong._

The great number of Dissenting Ministers in London, and the variety of talents and gifts at all times possessed by them, have had a tendency to draw away persons of an unsettled mind from their own places of worship. And it should seem there were such at that period, as the late Rec. John Newton used to designate _the flying camp._ To check such a practice the Assembly determined, _That the members of each church ought ordinarily to attend the worship of God in the church to which they stand related: and that to make a common practice of deserting the assemblies to which they belong, is a great discouragement to the ministers of those churches; that it occasions the neglect of the

poor among them; and that the continuance of such a practice has a tendency to weaken, and will perhaps, in time, issue in the dissolution of some churches._

1704: Principles of Separation.

Another subject to which their attention was called, was that of the separations which occasionally take place in congregational churches. Such events are often the occasion of painful regret, being sometimes attended with very disgraceful scenes of bad temper, producing strife and debate. It must however be acknowledged, while every step should be taken to prevent such separations, that they are at times, as in the choice of a pastor, unavoidable. All the members having an equal right to choose a minister whose knowledge and gifts are considered best adapted for their individual edification, it is not surprising that difference of judgment should exist, even among persons equally wise, and equally pious. In such cases there remains no alternative, but for the dissatisfied parties to remove their communion from a church, where a minister whom they disapprove is settled as the pastor. There have also been some instances, where a regard for purity of doctrine and discipline has rendered it an imperative duty to give a practical protest (the only effective one that can be given) against such errors, by withdrawing from such a society. To meet such cases, the Assembly resolved, _That in case the *minor* part of any church break off their communion from that church, the church state is to be accounted to remain with the *major* part. And in case the *major* part of any church be fundamentally corrupted with heresy and immorality, the *minor* part may and ought to separate from such a degenerate society, and either join themselves to some regular church or churches, or else, if they are a competent number, constitute a church state by a solemn covenant among themselves._

The controversy which took place among many of the London ministers on the occasion of the republication of the works of the Rev. Tobias Crisp, was prevailing at this period; and the subject was brought under the notice of the Assembly. *

(* Crosby, who quotes Nelson's *Life of Bishop Gull*, p. 259, says, (vol. iv. p. 384-387.) _Soon after the Revolution, a considerable progress was made in the attempt for a coalition between the Presbyterians and Independents. But great debates arose between them, the occasion of which was a reprinting of Dr. Crisp's works, (who was noted for his *Antinomian notions*, though reputed a very pious man,) with some sermons added; to which a paper was prefixed, subscribed by several ministers. A sort of apology for this was afterwards published, which was prefixed to Mr. Flavel's Discourse, entitled, _A Blow at the Root; or the Cause and Cure of Menial Errors._ Dr. Williams wrote against the errors of Dr. Crisp's sermons, and to his book the names of several ministers were subscribed. Mr. Lorimer wrote an apology for those subscriptions. A great variety of pamphlets were published on both sides, which made a great noise and stir. At length there came out, in 1692, a paper entitled, _The Agreement in Doctrine among the Dissenting Ministers in London._ This was subscribed by many, but it answered not the end, for the debates were still continued. One party suspected, or at least pretended to suspect, the other of verging too much towards *Arminianism*; and the on the other side charged their opponents with encouraging *Antinomianism*. Several papers were thereupon drawn up and

subscribed, in order to an accommodation. There was a first, and second, and third paper of this sort; and those very papers excited new altercations and debates, which were carried on with no small heat and pettishness; and a number that stood by could hardly tell what it was they contended about. Several new creeds were formed, and still objected to by some or other, either as too large, or too strait; too full, or too empty. The world was wearied out with pamphlets and creed-making. At length the Bishop of Worcester, Dr. Stillingfleet, and Dr. Edwards, were appealed to, who gave their judgments, &c. No reasonings, expostulations, or complaints could avail to extinguish the flame that was kindled. At length there was a design formed by the Independents, in 1694, to exclude Dr. Williams out of the Tuesday lecture of Pinners_ Hall; which not succeeding, a new lecture on a Tuesday was established at Salters_ Hall_ and this put an end to all attempts at promoting a coalition; though after this the controversy ended, and the angry disputants learned to live in peace, though still differing in opinion._)

1704: Antinomian Sentiments condemned.

By the following decision it appears that they strongly condemned the Antinomian principles, and supported those which were called, by the friends of Dr. Crisp, the Neonomian. They say, _It is the opinion of this Assembly, that the doctrine of sanctification by the imputation of the holiness of Christ_s nature does, in its consequence, render inherent holiness by the Holy Spirit unnecessary, and tends to overthrow natural as well as revealed religion. *

(* As a specimen of the incautious and erroneous manner in which Dr. Crisp speaks, the following quotation is given, (p. 272.) _Let me speak freely to you, and, in so doing, tell you, that the Lord hath no more to lay to an elect person, yet in the height of iniquity, and in the excess of riot, and committing all the abominations that can be committed;—I say, even then, when an elect person runs such a course, the Lord hath no more to lay to that person_s charge, than God hath to lay to the sin of a believer; nay, God hath no more to lay to the charge of that person, than he hath to lay to the charge of a saint triumphant in glory._

I should not wish to copy other passages of a similar nature; because I feel certain that the sentiments are entirely opposed to the doctrine of Paul, who, speaking of himself, (whom no one will doubt to have been an *elect* person,) and of other believers, says, *And were by nature the children of wrath, even as others*, Eph. 2:2. But if unconverted persons are the children of wrath, how is it possible that they should be as free from the charge of guilt as a saint triumphant in glory. A system opposed to the plain declarations of Scripture, however specious it may appear, and tending to lull persons to sleep in sinful security, must _tend to overthrow natural, as well as revealed religion!_)

1704: Errors of Dr. Tobias Crisp

This controversy continued for more than seven years, and some of the ablest pens amongst the Dissenters and Episcopalians were employed upon it. It is deeply affecting to find that any ministers of reputation should have been found to defend the unscriptural and dangerous sentiment of Dr. Crisp, viz. That _there was a commutation of persons between Christ and the sinner:_ so that Christ became the sinner instead of the person for whom he died; and the sinner became as holy as the Saviour in whom he believed. That some of the members of the Baptist churches should have embraced this specious pretence for exalting Christ, and should have been caught in the snare which was spread for their feet by a system so flattering to corrupt human nature, is not at all wonderful. But there is no evidence that any of our ministers at that time preached or defended this corrupt system: indeed the unanimous resolution of nearly forty persons, ministers and others, protesting against it, as in its tendency superseding the sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit in producing holiness of heart and life, and tending to overthrow not only revealed but natural religion, speaks loudly for the purity of doctrine which prevailed in the denomination upon this all-important sentiment;—a sentiment which, because directly opposed to the *sanctification of the Spirit*, is as much *another gospel, perverting the gospel of Christ*, as any opinion which strikes at the sufficiency of the merits of Christ alone to procure the justification of the ungodly sinner who believeth in Jesus.

Many causes had united to render the members of our churches indifferent towards assisting in the maintenance and support of their pastors. Some of the pastors had been compelled, during the persecuting times, to labour with their hands, that they might provide for the necessities of their families; and by continuing in the businesses which their industry had raised, they had no need of the assistance of their churches. But when these worthy and disinterested, but mistaken pastors were removed, the churches were not prepared nor inclined to raise the means of support for their successors. It was no wonder, therefore, that ministers should be exposed to considerable difficulties, who settled in such situations; and that even in London, which has always been considered the emporium of wealth, such poor pastors should have been found. It is to be hoped the congregations they served were also poor; otherwise an appeal made on their behalf to other churches, who had their own ministers to support, cannot be reconciled with the principles of justice. The following resolution was adopted by the Assembly;—_That it be recommended to the several *associate* churches represented by this Assembly, that each church do make an annual collection, for the relief of such ministers in and about the city of London, dwelling within the bills of mortality, as have but a small allowance from the churches to which they belong._

It had frequently been a subject of controversy in the denomination, whether the laying on of hands upon ministers at their ordination was proper or necessary. Some churches not only pleaded strenuously for this practice, as an apostolic and primitive custom; but also contended for the necessity of laying on the hands of pastors upon deacons when elected to that office, as well as upon persons who had been baptized, introducing them into the church by this rite, which answered, as they contended, to the ancient practice of confirmation. The Assembly gave no opinion upon the latter practice. It was, perhaps, one wherein some of the churches differed from the rest, and which they had agreed should not be controverted by them. But respecting the two former, they say, _It is the opinion of this Assembly, that the ordination of persons to the office of an elder, or that

of a deacon, by the imposition of the hands of the eldership, is an ordinance of Jesus Christ still in force._

Respecting the importance of literature to those who had devoted themselves, and had been called by the churches to the Christian ministry, they express themselves most decidedly favourable to it. This appears to have related to young ministers who could devote the whole of their time to academical pursuits; but as there were others whose engagements, and probably whose families, demanded their whole time and attention, they were desirous of procuring for them the best helps, which in their circumstances they could obtain, from sound theological writers. They therefore resolved, _That it would be highly useful, that a fund of money be settled and maintained, either by subscriptions or collections, as each church shall think most expedient, for the education of pious young men, who are in communion with one or other of these associate churches, and are blessed with promising gifts, in order for the better fitting them for the work of the ministry; and also for the furnishing others, who have not time to attain the knowledge of the tongues, and some other parts of useful learning, with such English books as may be thought most proper for their assistance and improvement: and that this be recommended to each particular church._

It is pleasing to observe the strong features of that pious feeling which appears to have animated the members of these assemblies of our brethren. They always adopted a resolution expressive of their deep humiliation on account of the state of religion in their respective churches; and also to declare their sense of the necessity of a divine influence to make their labours successful. On this occasion they resolved as follows;– _That it would tend much to the edification of the churches, frequently to keep days of fasting and prayer in each congregation; and sometimes for several churches to assemble together on such occasions, when it can be conveniently attained._

The measures adopted by this Assembly were all calculated to promote such peace and union as would prove permanent and beneficial. Let it be borne in mind too, that these measures came recommended by the venerable names of Keach, of Stennett, of Piggott, and of others, who were well known in that day as the messengers of the churches, and the glory of Christ; and some of whom are still revered for their learned and useful works, and for the success of their labours in the churches of Christ. The letter which was sent to the churches by this Assembly, enforcing the above recommendations, I have not seen; nor has Crosby, from whom I have selected the above particulars, made even an extract from it.

1705: Assembly at Joiners Hall

The Assembly met again March 25, 1705, at Joiners Hall. It appears that four of the churches had withdrawn; namely, those in Broad Street, Old Gravel Lane; Devonshire Square; Bagnio Court; and Lorimers Hall. Another church had joined them, assembling in Paul's Alley, Barbican, of which Mr. Richard Allen was the pastor. *

(* For an account of Mr. Allen, see vol. ii. p. 411.)

The public meeting on this occasion commenced with a sermon delivered by the Rev. Joseph Stennett. The thanks of the Assembly were afterwards voted him for the sermon, and he was desired to print it. This request was complied with. It is the first sermon in the second volume of his works: the text is Phil. 2:21; *For all seek their own, not the things*

which are Jesus Christ_s. Under the third head, in which this eloquent minister proposes to shew the reasons why ministers and people should seek *the things of Jesus Christ rather than their own*, there are some striking remarks.

After choosing Mr. Stennett moderator, and imploring the divine blessing upon their deliberations, they proceeded to business, by reading the several letters from the churches, and attending to any verbal communications from the messengers. They also permitted four brethren to attend, who were not members of the Assembly, but who had requested to be present as auditors of their debates and agreements; these were the Rev. Messrs. John Ward, Benjamin Cooper, Mark Key, and Ebenezer Wilson. Mr. Cooper had been a messenger to the last meeting from the church in Old Gravel-lane, Wapping; Mr.. Key from that in Devonshire-square; Mr. Ward, it is presumed, was pastor of the church at Luton; and Mr. Ebenezer Wilson had lately been invited by the church near Spitalfields.

They agreed to the same preliminary articles as at the former meeting; they adopted the former circular letter, after having carefully reconsidered it, paragraph by paragraph; and they resolved again to recommend it to the attention of the several churches belonging to the Assembly.

The business of the different meetings was conducted with the greatest unanimity: it was rare to observe one differing opinion among them; everything was debated with the greatest calmness and deliberation; and at the conclusion of the accounts of their consultations, they add, *_we cannot omit to mention with great joy and thankfulness to God, the spirit of love and peace which appeared in every representative at this Assembly.*

1705: Decisions of the Assembly justified.

The sentiments which they had delivered in the first year, respecting the necessity of order in the formation of new churches, and the reception of those who had been members of other churches, they were now called to act upon, in relation to a congregation of Baptists, meeting at Winchester-house, near Saint Mary Overie_s Dock, in Southwark. In an appendix to the address to the associated churches, they say, *_There are several persons who call themselves Baptists, that pretend to have formed themselves into a church of Christ different from the baptized churches in London, and are composed chiefly, if not only, of persons under the censure or dealing of some churches, or who had, after a disorderly manner, rent themselves from sundry churches in this Association, and from other baptized churches; and they receive persons into their said society without due recommendation from, or satisfaction to the respective churches to which such persons did belong; and to take a liberty to reflect upon and revile the baptized churches, and their ministers. All these allegations being fully proved to the satisfaction of the Assembly, it was agreed,*

1. *_That it is the opinion of this Assembly, that the said persons meeting at Winchester-house are not, nor ought to be esteemed, nor owned as a church of Christ.*
2. *_That it is the opinion of this Assembly, that it is irregular and disorderly for any members of a baptized church, to join themselves to them, or to frequent, or in any way encourage or countenance the said meeting at Winchester-house.*

3. _And we do recommend it to all the churches in this Association, to dissuade their members from any such practices; and to mark them that attend such an irregular meeting, as walking disorderly._

It is not stated what was the particular circumstance in which these persons were different from the other churches. It is, however, sufficiently apparent, that some of them had been members of the associated churches, but had been so dissatisfied with the proceedings of this Assembly the year before, as to rend themselves from them, and to speak reproachfully both of the churches and their ministers. Under such circumstances it was not to be expected they would be countenanced by the ministers and churches that had been treated by them with so much contempt. It is scarcely, however, to be supposed, that an assembly over which Mr. Joseph Stennett presided, would proceed so far upon a mere difference of opinion respecting a point of order, as to say of a number of professed Christians uniting together for the worship of God, that _they were not a church of Christ, _ and _ought not to be so esteemed or owned_ by other Christians. It is therefore highly probable, that the difference between them and other churches of the Assembly, related to the *doctrinal* sentiment which the Assembly had so strongly exposed, and so decidedly condemned, at its last meeting. That persons who had embraced the Antinomian creed of Dr. Crisp were found in the churches, it is evident from the subject having been brought before the Assembly; and that the terms in which the Assembly had expressed their sentiments would prove highly offensive to those who maintained the unscriptural crudities, and the unhallowed opinions of Dr. Crisp, may be easily conceived by those who have observed the effects produced upon the minds and tempers of those who embrace that creed. Not doubting that they are the only persons who understand the gospel, they are righteous in their own eyes, and despise others, Heady and high-minded, they listen to no reasoning, and appear in general to be out of the reach of argument. Hence it has followed, that though the Antinomian creed has been so often exposed as anti-scriptural in its principles, unholy in its influence, and at variance with the design and spirit of the gospel of Christ, it has in every age been embraced by ignorant and corrupt persons professing Calvinism, on account of its accordance with their contracted minds or unsanctified hearts. Upon the supposition that these were the principles and spirit of the people who assembled at Winchester-house, the writer is of opinion that the Assembly acted wisely in putting the churches upon their guard against persons maintaining such dangerous sentiments.

Nothing further is known of these people. The place was used by a Baptist church in 1692, and their ministers, Mr. Richard Baxter and Mr. David Fowler, belonged to the General Assembly. Mr. Wilson, in his *History of Dissenting Churches*, says, _Of these persons we know nothing, excepting that they appear to have been fifth-monarchy men, and to have been far gone in enthusiasm. The former of them published a book, with a quaint and disgusting title, which has been falsely attributed to the famous Mr. Richard Baxter, of Kidderminster._ Had these ministers been of the character described, they would not have been admitted to the Assembly.

1705: Request to Mr. Stennett to write a History of the Baptists.

Mr. Stennett had, two years before this, published his learned reply to Mr. David Russen's work, entitled, *Fundamentals without a Foundation, or a True Picture of the*

Anabaptists. In this work he displayed such solid learning and unanswerable arguments, that his friends wished him to undertake a complete History of Baptism. This matter was brought before the Assembly by the representatives of the church in Barbican, requesting that the Assembly would endeavour to prevail with and give due encouragement to Mr. Stennett, their president, to write such a work in defence of the practice of the baptized churches. The Assembly was informed, that at several meetings with Mr. Stennett upon the subject, he had been prevailed upon to write the title page, and the heads of several chapters, proper for such a work. At the desire of the Assembly Mr. Stennett read this plan, but intimated that he feared the circumstances of his health, and other affairs, would not permit him to undertake to accomplish it. It was however unanimously agreed, _That it is the opinion of this Assembly, that such a history as that proposed would be of great use and benefit to the public; that Mr. Stennett be, and he is hereby intreated to write the said history; that this Assembly will to the utmost encourage and promote the said work: that a committee be appointed to consult Mr. Stennett more particularly about the said history, and to consider the best method of defraying the charge thereof; that they likewise take the assistance of any other persons whom they think proper, whether they relate to the Association or not; and that the said committee consist of one member of each church in this Association, to be approved by the said churches, and now nominated and appointed by their representatives.

The following persons were selected to conduct this business, four of whom were competent to act:—

MR. JOHN TAYLORMR.

ABRAHAM ATKINS

JOHN VALLEY

RICHARD ALAND

JOHN BRAND

JOHN BURROUGHS

ABR. HICKMAN

HUMPHREY BURROUGHS

GEORGE JARVIS

RICHARD WILKINSON

They agreed also to hold their meeting at Deering_s Coffeehouse, Finch-lane, on the next Monday afternoon, and to adjourn from time to time at their pleasure.

This excellent work, however, (respecting which more particulars are given in our second volume, p. 403.) was never finished.

It does not appear how long these annual meetings of the associated churches in London continued. It is probable that the deaths of Mr. Stennett and Mr. Piggott, which took place in the same year, (1713,) and within a few months of each other, would greatly contribute to such an event; as there were no ministers of equal talent and celebrity to unite the energies and direct the measures of the churches. Of these eminent men it might be truly said, as of David and Jonathan, *They were lovely in their lives, and in their deaths they were not divided.*

1708: Political Changes in the Government

It was at the beginning of 1708, that the enemies of civil and religious liberty began to exert their influence at court, and the Queen was drawn into a plan to support those measures which were doubtless designed to prevent the protestant family of Hanover from coming to the crown. They wished to introduce the son (who was by many thought to be only the pretended son) of the late King James II; that is to say, of the Queen_s father, who, when he could not tyrannize over his subjects, had meanly abdicated the

throne. The change which now took place in the affairs of state, gave new life to the expiring power of the French monarch, and eclipsed the glory of her Majesty's reign, which had hitherto, been crowned with laurels of victory, so as to fill her friends with wonder, and her enemies with fear.

1708: Advice from the City to their Representatives.

At the time when parliament was convened this year, public affairs were brought to so critical a juncture, that many eminent citizens, with the approbation of several noble and zealous asserters of the English liberties, concluded that a paper of advice should be presented by the citizens of London to their representatives. That a Dissenting Minister, and a Baptist, should be selected to draw it up, gives us a strong idea of the distinguished eminence of the character of Mr. Joseph Stennett, who by that circumstance is again brought forward in our history.

This service was executed by Mr. Stennett with his usual ability; and though the paper, on some account which is not mentioned, was not presented, yet, as it shews the sentiments and feelings of the Baptists, at a period when the civil and religious liberties of Englishmen began again to be invaded, it ought to find a place in this history. It is as follows_ – _Gentlemen,

_As you have the honour to be chosen to represent this great city in the ensuing Parliament, so it is hoped it will not be disagreeable to you to know the sense of the generality of your electors, concerning the present posture of public affairs; and after what manner it is expected you will acquit yourselves of the trust reposed in you.

_It is your fortune to be chosen at a very critical juncture of time, and the august Assembly of which you are to be a part, will, in all appearance, have before them some of the most important affairs that ever were debated in Parliament; an the prudent management of which, under the divine Providence, not only the happiness of this city and nation, but the welfare of the whole protestant interest, and the greatest part of Europe, depends.

_All the world is convinced of the truth of that which her Majesty has so justly observed; that the late insolent attempt of the Pretender must needs have been encouraged by secret enemies of the government here at home; and their party appears too considerable to be either despised or neglected, which renders it highly probable, that a British Parliament will think it necessary to inquire into the hidden springs of that wicked and bloody design, that by detecting the treason of our intestine enemies, and by bringing the chief of them to justice, the rest may not flatter themselves that they may commit the blackest crimes with impunity; and that their confederates abroad, by observing the strength of the British government, may be discouraged from engaging in the like presumptuous enterprizes for time to come.

_We therefore rely on your integrity and zeal, that when the *plot*, on which the intended invasion was founded, comes to be examined, you will contribute all you can to the discovery of that treachery, and concur with those prudent measures which the wisdom of the nation shall see fit to take, for the security of her Majesty's person and government, from such horrid conspiracies for the future. A seasonable and nice scrutiny into this dark affair, will probably bring to light some of the mysterious causes of those uncommon difficulties under which the government has so much laboured, and may open a way to

some proper method for the revival and security of trade; which is an article the representatives of this city can never forget, without being guilty of a negligence and supineness not to be forgiven. Therefore we cannot forget to charge you with the necessary care of making in Parliament a full and lively representation of the calamities we have long suffered, sometimes for the want of convoys and cruisers; sometimes by their unaccountable delays, and the unseasonable time of their sailing; as well as by the undue pressing of men out of our merchant ships, by which our trade has been almost entirely ruined, and her Majesty's revenue very much diminished.

_We, moreover, earnestly desire you would embrace every occasion that may offer in a parliamentary way, to consolidate the happy union of England and Scotland, and to render it as complete as possible: for you cannot be ignorant how much the welfare of Great Britain, and indeed of all Europe, is concerned in the keeping of that union inviolable; and how much the confirmation of it will tend to mortify all those who wish ill to our happy constitution. And how much soever peace is to be desired, especially after a long and expensive war, yet it is so evident that it is impossible for the *balance* of power in Europe to be preserved, and the trade of this nation to be retrieved, without reducing the exorbitant power of France to just limits, and restoring the crown of Spain to the house of Austria; that we think it much more eligible to bear the burthen of a just and necessary war, than weakly to fall into the obvious snare of a *dishonourable and destructive* peace.

_We hope, therefore, you will do all that becomes our representatives to support the glorious cause of *liberty*, in which her Majesty and the nation are engaged, till peace can be attained on honourable and lasting terms, according to the unanimous resolution of the late Parliament.

1710: Dangers of the Dissenters.

_We conclude in assuring you, that if you are desirous of obliging us, you can do it in nothing so much as in shewing us a forward zeal for the vindication of her Majesty's rightful and lawful title to the crown, (A title founded on the just and glorious principles of the late happy revolution,) and for the security of the succession in the protestant line; and in readily complying with all such measures as shall be thought proper, to promote *union* and *moderation* among *protestants*, and to render them all as easy to one another, as useful to the community, and as serviceable to the government as possible. And all this we give you in charge, as you will answer the neglect of it to God, to your own conscience, to her Majesty, to the nation in general, and in particular to the city you represent.

And now, Gentlemen, we promise ourselves that your constant attendance in your places in the House of Commons, your assiduous application to the public business, and the peculiar regard to all the important matters we have recommended to you, will confirm us in the good opinion we have of your fidelity, and the other qualifications necessary to the discharge of so great a trust, as that of our *civil* and *religious liberties*; the preservation and security of which we commit to your care.

1710: Dr. Sacheverel's Trial.

The situation of the Dissenters, in consequence of the prevalence of high church and Tory principles, became very perilous. The envy, hatred, and malice, which the favour of the court towards them, from the period of the revolution, had excited, broke out in the year 1710, in disgraceful scenes of bigotry and intolerance. The immediate occasion of these outrages, which were displayed by an infuriated mob, in destroying their meeting-houses in London, was the trial of the Rev. Dr. Henry Sacheverel, in the House of Lords, for having preached a sermon in defence of the principles of non-resistance and passive obedience. This ecclesiastical firebrand, it is true, was found guilty; but the sentence that was pronounced was so lenient, that, the friends of the Doctor considering themselves to have obtained a victory, illuminations took place in London and throughout the country; and this idol of Toryism went through the West of England, enjoying a kind of triumph, and spreading the embers of faction in every place, to the annoyance of protestant Dissenters. This is not to be wondered at, as the Queen had now become the supporter of their enemies. She every day had attended the trial in the House of Peers, and in her way was greeted by the acclamation of the populace, who shouted _God bless your Majesty and Dr. Sacheverel._ *

(* Dr. Birnet, in his *Life and Times*, speaking of the mobs occasioned by this trial in London, says, that they destroyed five meeting houses, so far as burning all the pews in them. He adds, _there happened to be a meeting-house near me, out of which they drew everything that was in it, and burnt it before the door of the house._ Vol. ii.p. 542.

We find that the Baptist church in Paul_s-alley, Barbarican, Mr. Allen, pastor, made a public collection towards repairing such meeting-houses as were destroyed or otherwise damaged, by the mob at this time. It is probable that the other rich congregations of Dissenters did the same.)

Advantage was now taken of an Act which had been passed in the 13th year of Charles II for the purpose of harassing the Nonconformists, making it necessary that every schoolmaster should be a full and entire Conformist. This Act had not been repealed, and no notice was taken of it in the Act of Toleration, so that the Dissenting schoolmasters were exposed to its penalties. Several prosecutions were carried on under this Act against them; and having lost the sunshine of royal favour, they were without protection, and exposed to all the vexation which the petty malice of their persecutors, clothed with magisterial authority, could inflict.

1710: Integrity of the Baptist

At the conclusion of the war with France, it was much wished at Court that the general body of protestant Dissenting Ministers in London would present an address of congratulation to the Queen; but they could not be prevailed upon to do so. On this occasion the Baptists had an opportunity of giving full proof of the integrity of their principles, and the consistency of their conduct, which entitled them to the confidence and respect of their brethren of the other denominations.

A noble Lord, who had been a particular friend of Mr. Joseph Stennett, probably the Earl of Peterborough, was employed by her Majesty_s ministers, in connection with another noble Peer, to induce the London Baptists, in their collective character, as a separate denomination, to approve the measures of the government. Mr. Stennett was sent for by

them; these Noblemen thinking, that, if they could gain him over, it would go far towards accomplishing their object. Some things were insinuated by these Peers in their conversation, which tended to produce an alienation of the Baptists from the other denominations; and assurances were made to him, that such a compliance with the expectations of the Court, from him and his brethren, would be very acceptable; would bring them highly into the esteem of the Queen; and secure them any favour they could reasonably expect. Mr. Stennett was not to be taken with the gilded bait; he well knew that liberty was only safe when secured by the proper administration of the laws, and not when it was in any measure made to depend upon caprice and royal favour; and he assured their Lordships, without hesitation, that _neither himself nor his brethren could ever be brought to justify with their hands what their hearts disapproved; and that no particular advantages to them could ever counterbalance their regard for their country._ It is due to the reputation of Dr. Williams to say, that he as steadily resisted the solicitations of Robert Harley, Esq. afterwards Earl of Oxford. This firm and constitutional conduct was so gratifying to the Whig Lords, that they deputed a noble Earl to make their suitable acknowledgments for this seasonable stand of the Dissenters.

1710: Bill against Occasional Conformity.

It is not improbable that this refusal of the Dissenters might urge forward the measures which had long been in contemplation, to take away from them the benefits which they had thought were secured to them by the Act of Toleration. The bill to prevent _occasional conformity,_ (a practice with which some Dissenters, to the disgrace of their principles and the dishonour of Christianity, had been in the habit of complying, for the purpose of being admitted to places under the government,) was now contrived for the purpose of either driving them into the church, or out of the state; nor could those Dissenters justly complain of a measure which their inconsistencies had procured. *

(* The _Occasional Bill_ provided, _That any person holding any office, civil or military, or holding any office under the crown, who should, after being admitted to such office, knowingly or willingly resort to, or be present at, any Conventicle, for the exercise of religion, in other manner than according to the Liturgy and practice of the Church of England, when there should be ten persons or more assembling together, over and above those of the same household, although the Liturgy should be there used, or when her Majesty should not be prayed for in express words, according to the Liturgy of the Church of England, should forfeit forty pounds, &c.; and to be disabled thenceforth to hold any such office, &c.; except upon conforming to the Church of England, and for the space of one year not being present at any Conventicle, and during that time receiving the sacrament at least three times, according to the rites of the Church of England; than to be capable of being again appointed to such offices, &c. The conviction to be upon the oath of two witnesses, before a justice of the peace,_)

1711: Perplexity of the Presbyterians.

The Baptists were not at all affected by the enactments of _The Occasional Bill._ Their ministers had steadily opposed and condemned the practice of profaning the Lord's

Supper, by taking it as a qualification for a civil office; and their members had either filled offices without such conformity, or been satisfied without posts of honour and employment under the government. The blow was aimed principally at the Presbyterians, many of whom, being persons of wealth and consideration in the country, had filled offices of magistracy, &c. and it should seem were generally in the practice of occasionally communicating with the Church of England; at least, whenever their nonconformity appeared to lie in their way to worldly honour and distinction.

The Presbyterian Ministers were by this measure plunged into very great difficulties.

They were now obliged either to part with their members of this description, or to exhort them rather to give up civil offices than leave their churches and ministry. I have before me a sermon preached at the Merchants' Lecture, at Salters' hall, January 22, 1711-12, by Dr. Williams, entitled *An Enquiry into the present Duty of Protestant Dissenters*.*

(* London, printed by J. H. for J. Laurance, at the Angel, in the Poultry, and Daniel Jackson, at the Bible and Three Crowns, Cheapside, Second Edition, 1712, price 4d.)

The text was Mark 10:29, 30: *And Jesus answered and said, verily I say unto you, there is no man that hath left house, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or brother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my sake and the gospel's, but he shall receive an hundred fold now in this time, houses, and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands, with persecutions; and in the world to come eternal life.*

The worthy Doctor had already preached three sermons from this text. In the fourth which he published, is discussed his fourth inference, viz. *It is true wisdom to be well and rightly instructed in what concerns the honour and interest of the Lord Jesus in our DAY and PLACE, and to be always ready to quit and lose all for the sake thereof.* The preacher then lays down seven propositions as preliminaries. These are discussed with great ability; but one is ready to be astonished that such a chain of logical principles should have been thought necessary to convince Christians that it was their duty to obey God rather than man! Had they believed what the Saviour has said, *No man can serve two masters; ye cannot serve God and mammon;* all the preacher's logic might have been spared, and all the perplexity of those worldly gentlemen prevented.

At length, after abundance of ratiocination, the Doctor comes boldly to a question now (says he) depending, and of great consequence to Dissenting Protestants, viz. *Whether the members of protestant Dissenting churches lawfully may altogether statelyly desert our public assemblies for worship, as a qualification to hold their present offices.* He states the question first *negatively*. It is not, 1. *Whether Dissenters may have occasional communion with the Established Church; this I grant, though it is more doubtful than heretofore:* *

(* The Baptists of that period seem never to have thought this a *doubtful matter*, whether persons professing godliness among the protestant Dissenters should take the sacrament as a religious test. The reader is referred to the memoir of Mordecai Abbot, Esq. in the account of Pinner's Hall church, as a proof of this remark.)

nor, 2. *Whether Dissenters may do much service in offices of trust, and should not, without just reasons, quit the capacity for usefulness; this I affirm, and wish all offices were filled by men best qualified, of whatever denomination.* *

(* It is an essential qualification to any man who would fill an *office* under government, that he be *conscientious*; but how can a man be *conscientious* who can deliberately prostitute the ordinance of the Lord's Supper?)

The Doctor then states *affirmatively*, that he is *fully* persuaded it is the will of Christ they should quit their offices and adhere to our public assemblies where they have opportunity.

He finds no difficulty in proving this assertion. Indeed who could resist such an argument as the following? When Darius issued a decree, that whoever shall ask any petition, of any God or man, save of himself, should be cast into the den of Lions, Daniel did not shut his *windows*, nor alter his *custom*, but thought it a matter of conscience, to venture office and life too, rather than let his enemies want evidence that no *decree* should restrain him from daily praying to his God, Dan. 6:7-10. p. 25.

1711: Objections answered.

The Doctor seems to have been perfectly aware that some of his hearers were likely to *shut their windows*, and alter their custom, though no *den of lions* was threatened. The greatest danger to which they were exposed was the loss of the golden chain, which they had long worn as a mark of their worldly distinction. He therefore concludes his sermon by answering some objections, which, it is probable, he had heard made by some of his rich friends.

Objection.—If we resign our office, we lose an opportunity for service.

Solution.—1. God may fill up your places another way. 2. However, God requires no service from you, nor will accept, nor usually succeed it, when undertaken on sinful terms; and he forbids you *to do evil, that good may come of it*. 3. I appeal to every unbiassed awakened conscience, whether you are obliged to continue the little service you can perform in your office, when it must be by renouncing your profession, deserting those who are subserving the interest of Christ, violating the gospel rule, (whereby church members are to assemble together with the church *in one place*,) approving what's destructive to the communion of saints, condemning all those who suffered for the Dissenting cause and assemblies, giving an occasion of offence to many, and disregarding the voice of the present surprizing providence, which may intend your safety and benefit. I am persuaded no man's service among us can be justified against the force of these reasons.

Objection.—We came into our office by a special providence.

Solution.—That was not to continue it upon these terms, but to shew your fidelity to Christ by laying it down. This ungodly age reckons all religion to be a trick or mere fancy, and all pretenders to it to be designing, and so selfish, that they will suffer nor lose nothing for it. It concerns all pious men not to confirm any in these atheistical notions; God often confuted them by his people voluntarily choosing to suffer, rather than desert his cause, and violate their consciences. Such an occasion has this signal providence set before you; the Lord grant you may not abuse it by unfaithfulness.

I have delivered my own soul—and since it was necessary that some or other of us should guard our people against the present temptation, I was the willinger to undertake it, because it is known, that my subsistence is no way concerned in any men's forsaking

or abiding with us; and therefore I can have no regard to any secular interest, when I declare my judgment._

1711: The Bill passed into Law.

This bill, which had been twice before rejected in the House of Lords, though it had in both instances passed the Commons, now passed the three branches of the legislature without any opposition; for, being tacked to a money bill, the Queen made no objection to sign it. This was at the end of the year 1711. Bishop Burnet says, _Some of the Dissenters complained much, that they were thus forsaken by their friends to whom they had trusted; and the Court had agents among them, to inflame their resentments, since they were sacrificed by those on whom they depended. All the excuse that the Whigs made in their easiness in this matter, was, that they gave way to it, to try how far the yielding might go towards quieting the fears of those, who seemed to think the church was still in danger till that act passed; and thereby to engage these to concur with them in those important matters that might come before them.:*

(* *Life and Times*, vol. ii. p. 585,586.)

In one of the former debates, in 1703, Bishop Burnet took a prominent part in opposing its passing. He considered the measure as _designed to make a breach on the Toleration._ He adds, _and I was resolved never to be silent, when that should be brought into debate; for I have long looked upon liberty of conscience as one of the rights of human nature antecedent to society, which no man could give up, because it was not in his power; and our Saviour_s rule, of doing s we would be done by, seemed to be a very express decision to all men, who would lay the matter home to their own conscience, and judge as they would willingly be judged by others._*

(* *Life and Times*, vol. ii. p. 364.)

I have not ascertained how the Presbyterian Dissenters acted upon this occasion. It is hoped they refused to leave their own places of worship, and that a regard to their principals as Dissenters, their affection for their ministers, and a sacred adherence to Christ as the only head of his church, so powerfully operated, that they *chose rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season, esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt.*

1714: History of the Schism Bill.

That no opportunity might be lost for crushing the protestant Dissenters, who had rendered themselves obnoxious to the men now at the helm, by their steady attachment to the protestant succession in the house of Hanover, they brought a bill into the House of Commons, May 12, 1714, entitled, _An Act to prevent the growth of schism, &c. and for the further security of the Churches of England and Ireland as by law established. This bill struck at the rights of conscience, and was the most grievous measure, probably, that could have been devised. It was designed to be followed up by another, viz. _to prevent all protestant Dissenters from voting at elections, or from sitting in parliament._ The direct and avowed object of the Schism Bill was to prevent the Dissenters from keeping up the succession of their learned ministers, by giving the established and endowed sect an absolute control over the education of children, and by preventing students for the

ministry among them from obtaining learning in England; all persons who kept a school being required to conform to the Church of England, and to obtain a certificate from the clergyman of the parish, that they had taken the sacrament; the neglect of which subjected them to fines and imprisonment, if they dared to teach little children the alphabet without such qualification! The catechism of the Church of England was the only one to be tolerated; and the Baptists especially were to have the mortification to know, that their lisping babes were taught to say, _In my baptism I was made a child of God, a member of Christ, and an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven._ *

(* It is said in the Life of Dr. John Gill, that the master of the school at Kettering, to which he went in 1709, required that all his boys should learn the Church catechism. John was at this time eleven years of age; and as neither himself nor his parents could thus violate their consciences, he was obliged to leave school at a time when he was making a rapid improvement in the languages, and when too he could not procure any other teacher.)

1714: Objections against the Schism Bill.

From the history of the debate in the House of Commons on the third reading of the Schism Bill, as given by Mr. Tindal, we learn that some of the members were very zealous on behalf of the Dissenters, representing it in general, _That it looked more like a decree of Julian the apostate, than a law enacted by a protestant parliament; since it tended to raise as great a persecution against our protestant brethren, as either the primitive Christians suffered from the heathen emperors, or the protestants from the inquisition._ Its ill consequences were pointed out, _as it would of course encourage foreign education, which, on the one hand, would drain the kingdom of great sums of money, and, on the other, which was still worse, would fill the tender minds of young men with prejudices against their country, &c. On the other side it was maintained, _that the dissenters were equally dangerous to the church and state._ It does not, however, appear that any proof was produced for this assertion. The Bill was carried May 22, 1714, by a majority of 237 against 126.

1714: Objections against the Schism Bill.

In the House of Lords it was opposed strongly. Lord Cowper said, _That instead of preventing schism, and enlarging the pale of the church, this Bill tended to introduce ignorance, and its inseparable attendants, superstition and irreligion._ In proof of this he said, _that, in many country towns, reading, writing, and grammar schools were chiefly supported by the Dissenters; not only for the instruction and benefit of their own children, but likewise of those of poor churchmen; so that the suppressing of those schools would in some places suppress the reading the Holy Scriptures._ The Earl of Wharton _wondered that noble Lords, who had been educated at Dissenting academies, and whose tutors he could name, were now so forward in suppressing them._ He reminded the bishops, who chose to be silent in the debate, of _a law that had not been yet recited—the law of the gospel;—to do unto others as we would be done unto._ The Earl of Nottingham said, _He had observed, both from history and from his own experience, that all the persecutions that had been raised in England against schismatics, originally proceeded

from, and tended to produce, popery._ He particularly excepted against that part of the Bill which enacted, _That any person who should keep any public or private school, or instruct any youth as tutor, should have a licence from the respective Archbishop or Bishop of the place,_ &c. _My Lords,_ he added, _I have many children, and I know not whether God Almighty will vouchsafe to let me live to give them the education I could wish they had; therefore, my Lords, I own I tremble when I think, that a certain divine, who is hardly suspected of being a Christian, (meaning Dr. Swift,) is in a fair way of being a bishop, and may one day give licences to those who shall be entrusted with the education of youth._

1714: Severity of the Schism Bill.

The Dissenters petitioned that they might be heard by their counsel against the Bill; but their petition was rejected by a majority of 72 against 66. Two days after, in a Committee of the whole House, the Bishop of London having suggested, _that the Dissenters had made this bill necessary by their endeavours to propagate their schism, and to draw the children of churchmen to their schools and academies;_ Lord Halifax replied, _That what they did was with the knowledge and consent of their parents, who, in many places, had not sufficient means to educate their own children._ He then moved, _that they might be allowed schools *to teach their own children*._ The debate lasted three hours, but the motion was negatived by 62 votes to 48. It was then moved, that _they might at least be suffered to have *school mistresses* to teach their children to read;_ which, after half an hour's debate, was carried without dividing. A clause was afterwards proposed and carried to exempt from the penalties of this Act any tutor, who should be employed by any Noblemen or Noblewomen to teach in their families, provided such person did in every respect qualify himself according to this Act, except only in that of taking out a licence from the Bishop._ This was carried by a majority of one only. The Bill was then carried by a majority of 177 against 72. The Bill, thus amended by the Lords, was sent down to the Commons, when Mr. Lechmere and Mr. Walpole represented, _That since the protestant Dissenters of Ireland were made liable to the penalties of this Bill, it were but just either to insert a clause in it or to bring in another Bill to make them enjoy the benefit of the Toleration Act._ But Sir William Wyndham and Mr. Campier said, _If leave were given to bring in such a Bill, they hoped they should have leave also to bring in another to incapacitate Dissenters from voting in elections for parliament-men._ Some members were for proposing that the clause which related to Noblemen having private tutors might extend to members of the House of Commons also; but others, being afraid any debate might occasion the loss of the Bill, urged the matter forward, and the Bill was carried by a majority of 168, against 98.

1714: Protest against it.

A very spirited protest was signed by six Dukes, one Marquis, ten Earls, two Viscounts, seven Lords, and five Bishops. The fourth article of this protest was, _This must be the more grievous to the Dissenters, because it was little expected from the members of the Established Church, after so favourable an indulgence from the Act of Toleration, and the repeated declarations and professions from the throne and former parliaments against all

persecutions, which is the peculiar badge of the Roman church, which avows and practises this doctrine: and yet this has not been retaliated even upon the Papists; for all the laws made against them, have been the effects and just punishments of treasons from time to time committed against the state. But it is not pretended, that this Bill is designed as the punishment of any crime which the protestant Dissenters have been guilty of against the civil government, or that they are disaffected to the protestant succession, as by law established; for in this their zeal is conspicuous._*

(* As an illustration of this statement, one instance out of many might be produced of the zeal the protestant Dissenters manifested for the protestant succession. It is taken from the Thanksgiving Sermon preached by the Rev. Joseph Burroughs, of Barbican at the meeting in Little Wild-street, Nov. 5, 1712. After enumerating various benefits which had resulted from the reign of King William the Third, he says, *Our liberties are more secured by law than before; and likewise the protestant religion is more effectually established by* SETTling THE SUCCESSION TO THE CROWN ON THE ILLUSTRIOUS HOUSE OF HANOVER._*A Thanksgiving Sermon, &c. 1713. p. 30.)*

1714: Enactments of the Schism Bill.

This Act enjoined, _That no person in Great Britain, or Wales, shall keep any public or private school, or seminary, or teach or instruct youth, as tutor or schoolmaster, that has not first subscribed the declaration to conform to the Church of England, and has not obtained licence from the respective diocesan, or ordinary of the place; that upon failure of so doing, he may be committed to prison without bail or mainprize; and that no such licence shall be granted before the party produces a certificate of his having received the sacrament according to the communion of the Church of England, in some parish church, within a year before obtaining such licence, and hath subscribed the oaths of allegiance and supremacy.

That if any person, having complied with these points, shall, knowingly or willingly, resort to any Conventicle, or be present in any assembly where the Queen is not prayed for he shall be liable to the penalty of this Act, and from thenceforth be incapacitated to keep any school, or seminary, or instruct any youth as tutor or schoolmaster. And if any person teaches any other catechism than what is set forth in the Common Prayer, his licence shall be thenceforth void, and he be liable to the penalties of the Act; but no person shall be punished twice for the same fact. Any person convicted by this Act, conforming to the Church for one year, without having been present at any Conventicle, shall be again capacitated. This Act to be construed to extend to Ireland. The penalty attached to the breach of this Act was, _to be committed to the common goal of the county, &c. where the offence is committed; there to continue without bail, &c. for the space of three months._

1714: Memorial to the Queen

The Dissenters had now but one resource, which was, to prevail, if possible, upon the Queen not to suffer the bill to pass into a law, by refusing the royal assent. They

accordingly resolved to present a firm yet temperate memorial to her majesty. This was printed, and circulated in an octavo pamphlet of 39 pages. *

(* This was printed in London for A. Bell, at the Cross Keys and Bible, in Cornhill, 1714. As the writer has never seen or heard of another copy of this memorial than that in his possession, he has been induced to reprint the whole, as a literal copy of a pamphlet too valuable to be lost. He begs his readers to recollect, that the Bill brought into parliament last year, by Henry Brougham, Esq. was the counter part of the Schism Bill, until the clause respecting taking the Lord's Supper was withdrawn. It is hoped that the obnoxious measure will not be again introduced.)

It is entitled _TO THE QUEEN. The humble Supplication of certain of her Majesty's faithful and peaceable Subjects, called Protestant Dissenters, in the name of themselves and the whole Body of the said *Protestant Dissenters* in England, in relation to the *Bill to prevent Schism*._

There is good reason to think that this measure emanated from the general body of Dissenting Ministers of the three Denominations in London, assisted by the respectable laymen of their respective congregations. There must have been, too, a correspondence with the country churches, to warrant the statement that it _was in the name of the whole body._

1714: Memorial to the Queen.

TO THE QUEEN.

_May it please your Majesty,

_We, your Majesty's faithful and peaceable subjects, the *protestant Dissenters* in England, being *fully satisfied* with the establishment of that blessed *toleration* which we now enjoy, granted to us as the consequence of the late happy *Revolution*, and by the just and exact compliance of the nation with the Declaration exhibited by the late Prince of Orange; which *toleration*, after his Highness's landing in England, was presented to the Parliament, and by them turned into a law, in the first year of the reign of the said Prince; when by the general consent of this nation, he that was first our glorious Deliverer, was afterwards declared our most gracious Lord and Sovereign. And being *fully satisfied* in our minds, and quieted with respect to our frequent apprehensions concerning the continuance and preservation of the said *toleration*, by your Majesty's frequent and gracious assurances, as well from the throne as upon other occasions, of granting us your royal protection, *upon our peaceable and dutiful behaviour*, and of your being resolved to preserve the said *toleration INVOLABLE*: and being nevertheless justly alarmed with the accounts we receive, from all hands, of the implacable hatred which our enemies profess, and of their resolutions, if possible, to deprive us of the benefit of the said *toleration*; (which, however, without your Majesty's concurrence, we know, to our great comfort, they have not power to accomplish;) do therefore with all humility cast ourselves at your Majesty's feet, and flying to your Majesty's known justice, and your tender care for the *peace and prosperity, ease and quiet* of all your peaceable subjects, present this our humble Supplication to your Majesty, most earnestly beseeching your Majesty to take our case into your royal consideration.

1714: Dissenters agree in Doctrines with the Church of England.

_We, *first*, humbly represent to your Majesty, That however we have been slandered, and injuriously charged as persons of irreligious principles, schismatical, and fanatical; which words of reproach have been unjustly cast upon us by our enemies, and often unanswerably refuted; that yet we are a body of your Majesty_s subjects, who claim the titles of *Christians* and *Protestants*, and as such humbly also hope for a share in your Majesty_s known zeal for propagating and protecting the true *Christian* and reformed *Protestant Religion* in all your dominions; and also a share in that profession which your Majesty so publicly made at your accession to the crown, of your sincere concern for the good of all your subjects, without distinction. We humbly represent to your Majesty, that we are also Christians of the same orthodox faith, and of the same universal Catholic Church of God, of which your Majesty has always professed yourself a member, and of which the Church of England, established by the laws of this land, is declared to be a branch; that we are the same with the said Church of England in all doctrinal articles, and in every principle essential to the life of a *Christian*, and *necessary to salvation*; having signed and subscribed to every one of the doctrinal articles of the Confession of Faith in the said Church of England, and to all the other articles of the said Church, except two only; which two being allowed and acknowledged, even by the Church herself, and by the laws of this land, not to be essential to salvation, or that the declining the same amounts to any breaking off from the unity of the faith, by which Christians are incorporated into Christ, the Head of the universal Catholic Church, or from that love, unity, and charity of Christians, by which all the members of that great Body are united to one another; we, the said Dissenters, have therefore been declared to be no schismatics, as we are maliciously represented to your Majesty to be by our enemies.*

(* The Act of Toleration excused Dissenting Ministers from subscribing the 34th, 35th, 36th, and the first sentence of the 20th article [which is not found in King Edward_s articles; but was added, no one knows *when*, or *how*, in the time of Elizabeth.] The Baptist Ministers were excused also from subscribing the _part of the 27th article teaching infant baptism._)

1714: Object to its Episcopal Government.

_We farther humbly represent to your Majesty, That being conscientiously scrupulous of conformity to some particular rites and ceremonies established in the Church of England, and which, however acknowledged to be indifferent in themselves, are imposed upon us as terms of communion; and not being able, without sinning against our consciences, to grant the power of the Church, or of the Civil Authority to make those indifferent things necessary; as also being not able in all things to agree to the *Episcopal Government* of the said Church, as it is established by law in your Majesty_s dominions_ for these reasons, *we have been obliged, in mere obedience to the sovereignty of conscience, being commanded to obey God rather than man; and being assured from God_s word, that whatsoever is not of faith is sin, to dissent and separate ourselves in communion, though not in charity or in doctrine, from the said Established Church;*

1714: Contribute to Support the Establishment.

Being in nothing enemies to the said Church, or to its present settlement, much less dangerous on any account whatsoever; but in all things quietly submitting to the laws of the land, to your Majesty's just authority, and even to those powers granted to the said Church of England as are not necessary to its preservation; not only freely and constantly paying all tithes, duties, and dues, which by the law are demanded of us for the support of the Clergy, Universities, *Schools*, and Edifices of the said Church, but in all places and on all occasions, freely and voluntarily contributing to all such collections, charities, free gifts, subscriptions, and payments whatsoever, as are found wanting for the support and relief of lectures, public sermons, charity schools, decayed or defaced churches, and all such acts of benevolence as are, either by your Majesty's briefs, or the recommendations of the Clergy and members of the Church, offered to us, without any distinction; and without objecting, that it is for the support of that Church which we do not conform to, or communicate with, and which too often, and on many occasions, professedly denies to us the same benevolence. And we cannot but with all humility insist in our claim of being received among the rest of your Majesty's subjects professing the same Christian religion with us, and of being acknowledged as true and orthodox *Christians* by them, and by your Majesty, *because*, to our great *comfort*, we have been, as of right we ought to be, frequently declared to be such, as well by your Majesty, and your glorious predecessors, as also by and with the united concurrence of the Lords Spiritual as well as Temporal, and Commons of the Realm, assembled in Parliament, who have solemnly pronounced and enacted, That we, the Dissenters aforesaid, are no Schismatics; and more especially, because in the late happy conjunction of your Majesty's kingdoms of England and Scotland, and in the exemplification and ratification thereof in Parliament, commonly called *The Act of the Union* of the Presbyterian Church of Scotland, whose Discipline, Worship, and Government is the same (*mutatis mutandis*) with what we profess, acknowledged to be a part of the true *Protestant Religion*, and the same is settled, confirmed, and established as the said true Protestant Religion, by the said Act of *Union*, and by the Parliament of England, of which your Majesty is the head, and of which the Lords Spiritual are so considerable a branch, and to which your Majesty has signified your agreement, by your Royal Assent to the said Act of *Union*, the Bishops of the Church of England representing the said Church of England in the same Parliament,

1714: Recognized as of the True Protestant Religion.

and to the same Act concurring and assenting_ the title of which clause is this, _For securing THE TRUE PROTESTANT RELIGION, AND PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH GOVERNMENT._ And we humbly hope and believe, that in a kingdom where the Church Government which we acknowledge is one part allowed, and likewise the doctrine and Church Government of that people is granted to be *the true Protestant Religion*, it shall never be supposed, that the same doctrine and government professed by us in another part of your Majesty's dominions, shall be deemed *schismatical* and *irreligious*. Having by these humble representations made room for our application to, and claim of, an equal share of your Majesty's favour and protection; and in hopes that while we continue loyal to, and *quiet* and *peaceable* under your Majesty's Government, we shall enjoy our part of the common blessings of your reign; we with all humility beg leave to represent to your Majesty a true state of our case, as to our dutiful and quiet

behaviour to your Majesty. And as to that malicious and unjust charge of which our enemies make so great advantage against us, viz. of our being disaffected to your Majesty_s person and government, and dangerous to the Church of England, both which are the pretences at present made use of to expose us to the resentment of the Government, and, if possible, to dispossess us of your Majesty_s favour, and of the liberty of our religion which we enjoy, as well by the law as by the happy continuance of your Majesty_s protection.

1714: Not disposed to meddle with Politics

_We humbly represent to your Majesty, that the breaches and divisions which are so increased at this time among your Majesty_s subjects, of which your Majesty has so frequently complained from the throne, and for remedy whereof your Majesty has so much and so often recommended *moderation, union* and *peace* among all your subjects, have been all along our affliction, and a sad presage to us of the general distractions of your subjects, in which our dangers are always justly to be apprehended. It is our happiness in some measure, in those things, that the present divisions, either in their rise or continuance, have not any concern with us, or with any thing relating to us, or in which we have any real concern *as Dissenters*. Our safety and quiet is always best founded in the general tranquillity of all your majesty_s subjects. Seeing,--as we have too often found by sad experience, every party in this nation, as they have striven to prevail against the other, have in their turn given us up, and made their advantages as occasion has offered them at our expense; and that our safety has consisted hitherto, next to the wonderful providence of God, not in our adhering to this, or that party, but in your Majesty_s steady and religious observance of that sacred promise often repeated from the throne, of preserving inviolably to us our religious liberties, upon which goodness of your Majesty, our present circumstances more especially guide us to depend;--seeing it is evident, that not our enemies only but even those who have professed a great concern for our preservation appear perfectly unconcerned in our danger, and are ready to join, upon any occasion, in our oppression; if, in those divisions aforesaid, some may have misrepresented us to your Majesty, as having abetted and assisted those who have appeared in opposition to your Majesty_s late or present measures of government; we most humbly beseech your Majesty to give ear to no such persons, to the prejudice of the Dissenters in general, forasmuch as that although *some* among us, or who call themselves Dissenters, may *foolishly, precipitantly, and without our approbation*, have engaged either with persons or parties in matters *of state*, yet the main body of us, your Majesty_s Dissenting subjects, spread into every corner of your dominions, are a quiet, peaceable, and inoffensive people, studying to do our own business, and perfectly ignorant of, and unconcerned in the strife of parties, or the breaches of the public peace, except to lament them as disasters to the nation, and to deprecate the evil consequences of them to your Majesty_s best and most faithful people of all persuasions; endeavouring, in all cases, to do our duty to God and your Majesty as becomes Christians and faithful subjects; and desiring no more, than to live quiet and peaceable lives under your Majesty, whom God and the laws have made our rightful Queen and Sovereign, in all godliness and honesty.

1714: Zealous for the Protestant Succession.

_If any shall suggest to your Majesty, that we are attached to the interest of the *Protestant Succession*, and have imbibed new principles of liberty, the first leading to be meddling in, and jealous of the affairs of state, and of your Majesty_s administration; and the other making us uneasy with the legal administration of your Majesty_s just authority: we humbly crave leave to clear ourselves of both these hateful accusations, and to represent to your Majesty how greatly we are injured by such calumnies, and in what manner, and to what ends and purposes, we are misrepresented to your Majesty on those accounts. We are fully satisfied by the provision made in the constitution of the kingdom, at the time of the late blessed and glorious Revolution, viz. the Act of Settlement of the Crown, (of William and Mary, cap. 1) and in the several laws subsequent thereunto, to which your

1714: Attached to the House of Hanover.

Majesty and your Royal Predecessors have given the Royal Assent; and more particularly that the Settlement of the Succession of these Crowns, after your Majesty, *whom we pray God to preserve*, is, by the voice of the nation, established in the illustrious Princes of the House of Hanover, viz. the Princess Sophia, and the heirs of her body, remainder to their heirs in lineal descent, *being Protestants*. We believe it to be the expectation of all your Majesty_s kingdom, that this succession should, in its due time, take place; and we cannot doubt but it has ever been agreeable to the designs and resolutions of your Majesty, that all your subjects should thus believe; and for any one to suggest, that by our being zealously attached to the said *Protestant Succession*, we should necessarily be made jealous of your Majesty_s Administration, is an inimitable affront to, and horrid assault on the honour of your majesty, and the justice of your Majesty_s administration, in an undutiful and disloyal manner suggesting that your Majesty would be offended, that your people should adhere to that *Protestant Succession* which you had so constantly declared for; and for the security whereof so many necessary and wholesome laws had received the sanction of your Royal Assent; and we cannot be persuaded, but that when we shew our abhorrence of every attempt to weaken the securities of the said *Protestant Hanover Succession*, we discharge our duty, not to our country and posterity only, but to your Majesty, in the best manner possible, and in the manner above all other most pleasing and agreeable to your Majesty, as it is exactly suited to what those laws require, which your Majesty, as aforesaid, has passed, and particularly to the Act of *Union* aforesaid, which your Majesty has declared was esteemed by yourself *as the greatest glory and felicity of your reign*; and which we have great reason to believe your Majesty esteemed so, principally because it tended so much to the quieting the minds of your subjects in both kingdoms, and reconciled all the dangerous disputes which seemed to be in view at that time among your people, about the said *Protestant Succession*; which Protestant Succession is, by that very Act, rendered immortal, unalterable, and no more to be brought into dispute among us. And yet may it please your Majesty, we humbly hope, that as our adhering to the same Protestant Succession has been with all deference and duty to your Majesty, who is the only rightful and lawful possessor of the crown, and whose mild, gentle and merciful government, is the great present felicity of your subjects; so we humbly conceive it is highly consistent with our said duty to your Majesty, and is by the laws made a part of our said duty, that we should, with the same fidelity that we serve your Majesty, preserve our loyalty and affection for those whom your Majesty has

declared the apparent heirs of the crown, and to whom, by your assent, we and our posterity are to be subject.

1714: Disown some factious Dissenters.

As to the unhappy debates relating to the measures of your Majesty's Administration, or the persons whom your Majesty has, from time to time, entrusted with the Executive Authority of your Government, we humbly assure your Majesty, we desire to have no other concern therein, than to lament that, whether with cause given, or without cause given, the heats and animosities of parties among your people should be carried up to such a height, as to make either your Majesty uneasy in the possession of the crown, or your people uneasy to one another. And we look upon this with more regret, as we think our own share therein very unhappy, seeing that whether any of our Body are drawn in, by evil persons, to concern themselves therein, farther than is their duty, and whether they have done so or not; yet we, who have not the least concern therein, other than as aforesaid, to deprecate the evil consequences thereof to your majesty and your dominions, are unhappily sufferers in the reproach thereof, which is unjustly cast upon us. Nor is this all; for if, as we fear, your Majesty should be so far moved against us by the *misbehaviour of some few of our Body, who therein we hereby disown, and by no means justify or join with, or by the misrepresentation of our enemies*, as to resent, to our loss, the said misbehaviour, it would not only be our unspeakable disaster, but may tend to our ruin and destruction as *Dissenters*: while at the same time, we humbly assure your Majesty, that as we are guilty of nothing that can reasonably move your Majesty to such displeasure, so we cannot suffer that loss without the greatest wrong and injustice done to us, by those who thus maliciously represent us to your Majesty, who endeavor thereby to deprive us of your royal favour and protection_ and as, with all humility, we protest our innocence, so we most humbly beseech your Majesty not to entertain any apprehensions of us, the said Dissenters, or of our behaving in any thing disloyally and undutifully to your Majesty, upon any occasion whatsoever; our utmost desire in this world being to see your kingdoms flourish in *peace and liberty*; the laws in their free course; justice equally administered; and all your subjects united, easy, and prosperous, under your Majesty's government and protection.

1714: Their Obligations to the Queen.

_We humbly acknowledge, that we owe your Majesty's goodness *several advantages and privileges which the laws have put absolutely in your power* to abridge us of;*

(* Probably alluding to the existence on the Statute Book of the Act against Dissenting Schoolmasters and others of a similar kind, which had not been enforced since 1688.)

the long enjoyment whereof, as it has been a testimony to us, that we have not been always esteemed unworthy of your Majesty's favour, so has it been a singular blessing to us, and has given us great cause to render thanks to God for your Majesty's reign, and for inclining your royal heart to such moderation and forbearance; and has endeared your Majesty to us as subjects, and caused us to pray with the greatest sincerity and

affection, for your long and prosperous reign over us; and it is the greater affliction to us to be now abridged of any of those favors which we have so enjoyed under your Majesty_s government, because we are not conscious to ourselves of having given the least provocation to your majesty to be displeased with us as having been wanting in our duty to, or affection for your person or government in any respect whatsoever.

1714: Consider the Toleration as Violated.

1714: Their Right to Educate their Children,

and to propagate their Sentiments.

Among the said advantages which we have enjoyed under your Majesty as aforesaid, the liberty of teaching and instructing our children, and educating them as well in the knowledge of letters, as in the principles of the Christian religion, and the understanding of their duty, both to God and your Majesty, is *not the least*; as, on the other hand, the liberty of educating those who are set apart for religious services, according to our own way, that a succession of godly Ministers might be preserved to us, and our prosperity after us, *we esteem the greatest*. These privileges, however they are not made a part of the legal toleration, which, as aforesaid, are established to us, and that we have enjoyed the same, as the effect of your Majesty_s goodness; yet we humbly represent to your Majesty, that they are things so essential to, and such necessary consequences of the Toleration itself, that we cannot but believe, that we have enjoyed the same with your Majesty_s *good pleasure*; and as the consequences of those promises aforesaid, which your Majesty was so often pleased to make, of *preserving the same toleration inviolable*. And may it please your Majesty, we cannot, but with sad hearts, look upon all attempts to deprive us either of a succession of Ministers to assist us in the worship and service of God, or of needful Schools, for the education and instruction of our children, by which alone the same toleration can be made effectual to our posterity, as so many constructive invasions of the said toleration, which we had so much reason to hope should be inviolably preserved; seeing that any toleration of the public worship of God, according to our consciences, must be imperfect which does not allow us to have *Ministers* brought up to officiate in the said worship. And we humbly suggest to your Majesty, that, when we had a toleration allowed for religious assemblies, and a method therein prescribed for the ascertaining the qualifications of our said Ministers and of the places where they should exercise their functions, it cannot be supposed but that the said ministers were tacitly, though not explicitly, allowed to qualify themselves by all needful studies, acquirements of learning, knowledge of religion, and the like, for the holy office, for which they were to be separated and inducted. Likewise we humbly represent to your Majesty, the sad and lamentable case, of our families and posterity, if the education of

our children be taken from us, and if we are deprived of the advantage of schools for the instruction of our said children in the knowledge of letters, and in the principles of the *Christian Religion*; in which case, as your Majesty is not only the nursing mother of a great and populous nation, but is not a stranger to the affection of *a natural Mother to children of her own body*, we humbly appeal to your Majesty to judge on our behalf what an inexpressible affliction it must be to so many thousand families of your subjects, *who not being able*, from sincere scruples of conscience, and for no wicked factions, or dividing principles, as our enemies falsely suggest, to suffer our *children* to be brought up in the *Church of England*, should be therefore deprived of all opportunities of giving them such learning and such education and instruction as is necessary to fit them for their respective employments, and as may fit them, as aforesaid, for the service of God, your Majesty, and their country.

_We know it is wickedly suggested, that we have the Toleration only as a present exemption from the punishment of the laws then in force, and that it was not the intent and meaning of the said *toleration*, that we should propagate the separation to our posterity; and we find some who have endeavoured, though very weakly, by their writings to persuade us, that it is our duty, although we cannot ourselves conform, yet to breed up our posterity in principles of *conformity to the Church of England*. But, Madam, your Majesty must have very mean thoughts of the sincerity of our principles, and our enemies might, with much more justice than now they can, tax us with hypocrisy, and with being not really conscientious *Dissenters*, if at the same time that professing ourselves not able to conform to the worship and government of the *Church of England*, we, on mere scruples of conscience, separated from her communion; and yet at the same time could educate our children in that way which we could nor join in ourselves.

_If, Madam, we did not believe that it is our indispensable duty to serve and worship God in that way which is in our opinion most agreeable to his revealed will, and if we did not believe that the worship, ceremonies, &c. which we dissent from are not most agreeable to the said will of God, we could not have any justifiable reason for our dissent: but, Madam, while we are persuaded, that the way in which we serve and worship God, without making any reflections, is, as aforesaid, the most agreeable to the word of God, which is his revealed will, and that therefore we think ourselves bound in duty to adhere thereto, your Majesty would most justly condemn us, as being without all sincerity, and mere hypocritical *Dissenters*; or on the other hand, as being without natural affection to our children, especially without affection to their souls, if we could so far neglect them, as to educate them in such a worship which we did believe was not the most agreeable to God_s will; so that, Madam, we humbly represent, that either we must cease to be *Dissenters*, or cease to be moved with an affectionate concern for the souls of our children, or we must think ourselves bound, both by the laws of God and nature, to instruct them in the *Christian religion* in the same manner and in the same principles as we ourselves profess it. And we humbly lay the consideration of this case before your Majesty, viz. whether abridging us of the liberty of educating our children, and of instructing them in the same principles of the *Christian Religion*, and in the same manner of worship and practice which we believe to be best and most agreeable to the will of God, is not our indispensable duty which we cannot go from, and may not omit, on pain of Gods vengeance, and most righteous judgment, both here and forever; which, if it be true, as we believe, we cannot on any terms, comply with, without sin, or our enemies

impose upon us, without being guilty of manifest persecution; which according to the declaration of several late Parliaments, is voted to be contrary to the principles of the Christian religion, and to the practice of the Church of England in particular. We humbly crave your Majesty_s pardon, if with the greatest deference to your Majesty_s known clemency, and that compassionate merciful temper, with which it is known you have always treated your subjects, we lay before your majesty something of the nature and consequences of such persecuting laws, as either have been in force in this nation, or as may be made or revived by any influence which our enemies may have in time coming, to the prejudice of the Dissenters; and humbly to expostulate, not with your Majesty, but with all those who misrepresent us to your Majesty, in order to bring us under your displeasure, and to destroy the interest we have had in your Majesty_ protection.

1714: Not united as a Body.

My it please your Majesty; we are far from representing ourselves as a body, either formidable to our enemies, or dangerous to the state on any account. We are many in number indeed, but without the least appearance of a body. We on all occasions covet to be as we really are, under the protection of no human power but that of your Majesty and the laws. Our enemies cannot accuse us of being in any concert one with another, or not so much as what ought to be for maintaining the needful correspondence among ourselves for our conduct of our religious interest. We are not separated from, but are promiscuously scattered among all your Majesty_s subjects, and in all parts of your dominions; we have no public leaders, public heads, public stock, or public strength, nor do we ever seek any, but are entirely naked and defenceless; disconcerted, divided from one another, and too much uneasy one with another.

1714: Not dangerous to the State.

The scandal of so much as thinking ourselves powerful, much less of being so in reality, will not lie against us, even our enemies themselves being judges, so that all the suggestions which have been made, *of our being dangerous to the state*, are so evidently malicious, and without weight, that we are under no apprehensions that your Majesty will or can be imposed upon in that case about us. On the contrary, our enemies find it but too easy, on all occasions, to oppress and invade us; and had not the honour and veracity of your Majesty interposed, your Majesty is witness for us, how often they would, and easily could have finished our ruin, and dissolved the Act of Toleration, which is the foundation of the liberty we enjoy; and we, on the other hand, are witnesses to posterity, how constantly and steadily your majesty has maintained us in the enjoyment of our religious privileges, and preserved us from the danger of an *unchristian persecution*; which protection we, on all occasions, have expressed our sense of, and thankfulness to your Majesty for, and are not conscious that we have willingly, or as Dissenters done any thing to forfeit. Nor have our enemies only found it easy to oppress us, and to crush us with limitations and restrictions, such as the laws of toleration have left but too much room for; but even those people who we are reproached with serving, and for adhering to whom, in civil affairs, we have been misrepresented to your Majesty, have, on all occasions, assisted our said enemies to take from us all power of making ourselves

considerable in the said civil affairs, by entirely disabling us to appear in public matters, removing us from all the advantages of magistracy in towns, or offices in the courts, whereby we might be capable, by our numbers, to give any weight on one side or on the other; in doing which however, they have, though perhaps against their will, done us this favour, that being so entirely under their foot, with respect to power, the charge of being dangerous either to *Church or state*, can never more be brought against us. All pretences, therefore, of our suggesting the ill consequences of these things as the effect of our strength or number, being thus removed, we, in the humblest manner possible, represent to your Majesty the evil consequences of any laws which shall or may be made to suppress us, to persecute us, or to abridge us of the just liberty which we enjoy. And, first, we humbly represent, how great a breach such things must necessarily make of that peace and union among all your Majesty_s subjects, which was in a great measure compassed by the Toleration; which your Majesty has so earnestly and so often recommended to all your people from the throne; and which, however, by heats and animosities of another nature, and by the warmth and intemperate conduct of men of all sides and parties, is interrupted, yet, blessed be God, there is room to hope, and expect, it might be yet obtained under your Majesty_s mild and merciful administration.

1714: The Bill destructive to the Peace of Society.

_It cannot but be a grief to all your Majesty_s good subjects, who wish to see the whole nation united in affection to your Majesty, and in zeal for the public safety, to find that to the present unhappy breaches, which too much agitate the minds of your subjects, and which break in upon the peace of societies, neighbourhoods, and even families, about state affairs, which few rightly understand, should be added, the revived rancour and animosity, which so long and with so many evil effects, distracted this nation, for fifty years before the Revolution, upon differences in religion; all which the charity and forbearance of the *Church of England*, and the satisfaction which the *Dissenters* reaped in an uninterrupted toleration had happily laid asleep, and which began, on both sides, to be forgotten among us. Your majesty has had many examples of the follies committed on both sides, in those days, to the uneasiness of the government, and the great disquiet of the nation, from the heat and oppression of the *persecuting penal laws*, immoderately executed on one hand, and from the immoderate zeal of those, who by those unjust pressures, and the various sorts of violence which they suffered, have rather been driven farther off from the Church, than reduced to its disobedience on the other hand.

1714: Persecution had increased the Dissenters.

We humbly leave it to your Majesty_s consideration, and believe that your Majesty_s experience cannot but join with us in it, that the persecution of Dissenters in the former reigns, did not only fail in the end proposed, (*viz. of reducing them to a conformity to the Church.*) but, on the contrary, rather increased the numbers of the Dissenters in your dominions; many families of *moderate people*, before of the Church of England, being filled with such aversions to the violences offered to conscience, which they thought unchristian, and with compassion for the sufferings of others, as thereby to believe the sufferers the *best Christians*, and came over to them accordingly. On the other hand, it

seems to be out of question, that, saving the benefit of our liberty, which we are thankful to God and your Majesty for, the numbers and interest of the *Dissenters* have been far from increasing, or gaining ground by the said *toleration*. We acknowledge, Madam, that taking away the Schools and Academics of the *Dissenters*, is not an immediate depriving of the toleration, though it abridges us of those appendices of liberty, which we enjoyed as consequences of the *toleration* as aforesaid; and that we are not thereby abridged of educating our youth, and preserving a succession of Ministers, by sending them into foreign parts, and bringing them up in Schools and Universities of other countries. But we humbly represent to your Majesty, that these things cannot but fill us with just apprehensions, that farther hardships may be prepared and designed for us; and that those who can be so unjust to us as to insinuate that we are *dangerous to your Majesty's interest, unworthy of your royal favour or protection, and not to be obliged with such advantages, as by your Majesty's goodness we have enjoyed*, will not fail, as far as possible, upon all occasions, to incense your Majesty against us, and to prepossess your Majesty so far in our prejudice, as to make other and farther hardships and restraints upon us to seem necessary; and, at last, to bring upon us a repeal even of the *toleration* itself, and a return of all the former violences of persecution, under which we, and our immediate progenitors, have so deeply suffered already. We farther represent to your Majesty, that as it may be true, that we may as aforesaid, send our children for education and instruction to foreign parts, whereby the succession of our Ministers may be preserved; yet that this confirms our apprehensions, as aforesaid, that our enemies will not rest here, but are resolved if possible to push on their designs against us, to our entire ruin, and to the divesting us of the privilege of the *toleration* itself, as aforesaid; since otherwise the easiness of our bringing up young Ministers is secured, and that thereby the end of the present design will be defeated, should be a forcible reason against their proceeding against us in this manner, as being a thing perfectly ineffectual, and not capable of answering what is proposed by it, viz. *of putting an end to what they call the schism*.

1714: Bill would impoverish the Nation, and punish unborn Children.

And yet on the other hand we cannot but represent to your Majesty, that our educating our youth abroad is many ways injurious, not to our families only, but to the public stock of the kingdom, causing great numbers of youth to settle in foreign parts, and never returning at all; to the lessening the numbers of your people; and causing great sums of money to be yearly expended in foreign countries, to the manifest loss of our own. But we humbly lay ourselves at your Majesty's feet, in behalf of the posterity of our poorer brethren, whose families being large, and substance small, are not able to support the expense of foreign education; and who yet being restrained by the same principle of conscience by which they dissent, and not able, with satisfaction, to breed up their children under Church of England tutors and schoolmasters, will be thereby obliged to content themselves with keeping them at home, and bringing them up with that little family instruction which they are able to give them, to the great scandal of their country, the discouragement of literature, and in consequence thereof, the abounding ignorance, which is the mother of error and confusion. For these and many other reasons, we humbly supplicate your Majesty to take our case into your royal consideration: we beseech, and

with all humility entreat your Majesty to consider us and our innocent posterity, who are represented as enemies to your Majesty before they are yet born, or before they know their right hand from their left, in the offences which our enemies suggest as the reason of their proceeding against us.

_We humbly plead with your majesty, that if, as is suggested, some of us may have unwarily failed in their duty, and, in their mistaken zeal for the nation_s liberties, may have *fallen in too much with*, and gone too far in the *party disputes*, which now embarrass the public affairs; (which steps of theirs, we, as aforesaid, *utterly dislike*, and daily blame them for;) that yet, on the contrary, the main body of *Dissenters* are your Majesty_s faithful subjects, steady in your interest, and depending upon the justice and faithfulness of your Majesty, for the safety and preservation of their liberties, *Protestant Religion*, *Protestant Succession*, and the public good of their country against all the Popish Interests, Princes, and Pretenders in the world. We humbly plead, Madam, that, to the utmost of our power, we have been assistants to bear the burden of long and expensive wars, in defence of the honour and dignity of the crown, and against Popish and French tyranny: we have spent our blood and estates in the service of your Majesty and our country; have fought and paid as far and faithfully, in proportion, as our brethren of the Church; and pardon us, Madam, to say, that we were in hopes our said brethren would not have envied or prevented us in enjoying with them the blessings and comforts of peace: and we cannot but think ourselves unkindly treated by them who envy us our share in the happiness of your Majesty_s reign, *which we pray God may be long and prosperous*, on pretence of our being disloyal to your Majesty, and dangerous to your Government, to preserve which, there are so many among us left fatherless, widows, childless, and maimed, both in families and persons, by the long and faithful services which we have performed in your Majesty_s armies and navies. We most humbly supplicate your Majesty, that as we are not conscious of any crime, and that our enemies cannot charge us, as *Dissenters*, with acting anything contrary or inconsistent with your Majesty_s interest, or our duty to your Majesty; so our enemies may not prevail with your Majesty to withdraw your protection or favour from us.

1714: Dissenters amount to more than a Million.

We beseech your Majesty, that as our years of peace are to begin at this period, the ruin of our religious liberties may not be dated from the epocha with the enjoyment of our civil liberties; and that our children may not date the persecution they shall suffer, from the very same year of your reign from which the nation dates their *quiet and tranquility*; that we may not mourn when all the rest of your subjects rejoice; and that your Majesty, who we are assured wishes for nothing more than the prosperity of all your people, may not have the disappointment to see a constant series of afflictions entailed upon more than a million of innocent people, your subjects; and their days made miserable by the persecution and prosecution for the mere profession of religion, and preserving their consciences free from impositions of human inventions.

Lastly, We humble entreat your Majesty, to pardon the freedom of this supplication, and of all concerned therein, there being no meaning or design therein, but to obtain from your Majesty, that no Act may obtain your Royal Assent, which may lessen the religious privileges of your faithful subjects, the *Dissenters*; abridge them of liberties and of the

happy quiet of their consciences, in the matters of religion, which they now enjoy; or may restrain them from instructing their children in the fear and knowledge of God, and of their duty to your Majesty; to be deprived whereof, would reduce us to the greatest perplexities and difficulties imaginable.

_God preserve your Majesty_s valuable life; and make your reign long and prosperous; grant you peace and victory over all the enemies of your Person and Government; and inspire your Majesty with divine grace that you may exalt religion, honour the King of heaven, establish peace, charity, and a reconciliation of parties among all your people; to the glory of your Majesty_s reign, and the lasting comfort of the whole nation, is the united prayer of all your Majesty_s *faithful and peaceable protestant subjects* throughout your dominions, and in a particular manner of

THE DISSENTERS

1714: The Bill receives Royal Assent.

Notwithstanding this _humble supplication,_ the Queen was so infatuated by the counsels of the high church party, that on the 25th of June, 1714, she ordered that the royal assent should be given to it by commission. _But it is observable,_ says the continuator of Rapin, who was a clergyman, and who does not express one word of disapprobation of the measure, _the very day (August the first) it was to take place, the Queen departed this life; which accident broke all the measures of those who had promoted that law, and rendered it in a manner ineffectual!_

1714: Deliverance by an unexpected Event.

Bishop Burnet says, that the parliament which passed this Bill was the worst that he ever knew._*

(* Burnet_s *Life and Times*, vol. ii. p. 63.)

The spirit that was manifested against the Dissenters between June 25th and August 1st, gave full opportunity to the enemies of the Dissenters to shew the manner in which it was to have been rendered effectual; and, but for the _accident,_ as Mr. Tindal calls it, of the Queen_s death, that clergyman would doubtless have been prevented from apparently sighing over such a measure as that of the persecuting Schism Bill being unfortunately broken! The penalty would certainly have been very rigorously executed by those who wished to prevent even the indulgence to Dissenters of school-mistresses for their unoffending babes. The Dissenters were to have no alternative between their children being taught doctrines and practices which they believed to be unscriptural, or their being left to the darkness of mental ignorance. Is it then to be wondered at, that when reduced to such degradation, and when their prospects were rendered so dark and portentous, they should have earnestly prayed that God would mercifully interpose, and work deliverance for them and their children? Who can feel surprise if, when that deliverance was granted them, though probably in a way they did not expect, they should consider it not in the light of an _accident,_ but of an *answer to prayer*, and should rejoice in the event, even when that event was the death of the Queen? THE FIRST DAY OF AUGUST should be ever recollected as the anniversary of a deliverance, as great, in behalf of protestant

Dissenters, as that which the Jews annually commemorated on the days of *Purim*, Esther 9:28.

1714: The Death of the Queen introduces a great Change.

The Baptist historian, Crosby, says, respecting this event, _But providence, and its inevitable degrees, took the whole work out of their hands, surprising to all, but terrible as a clap of thunder to the enemies of the protestant succession._ Her Majesty expired the *first of August*, a little after seven o'clock, in the 50th year of her age, and the 13th of her reign.

1714: Sermon on the Death of the Queen.

The sentiments and feelings of the Baptists on account of the death of Queen Anne, and of the protestant succession in the house of Hanover, shall be given in the words of Mr. Benjamin Stinton, son-in-law and successor to Mr. Benjamin Keach, in some extracts from a sermon entitled, _A Discourse of Divine Providence; occasioned by the demise of her late Majesty Queen Anne, and the happy Accession of our present Sovereign King George to the Throne of Great Britain, &c. Second Edition, 1714._ The text is Dan.. 2:20, 21. *Daniel answered and said, Blessed be the name of God for ever and ever; for wisdom and might are his; and he changeth the times and the seasons; he removeth kings, and setteth up kings; he giveth wisdom unto the wise, and knowledge to them that know understanding,* In applying the text to the occasion, this judicious minister remarks, _You cannot but have observed, that the state of affairs in this kingdom has lately received a very great and unexpected turn; and if we look back a little to the posture of affairs a few months since, and compare them with the present state of things, the greatness of this change will be very visible to us. So bad was our condition, that a great prelate (Bishop Burnet) thought it not improper to compare it to the miserable circumstances we were in before the happy revolution in 1668. _It may not be an improper attempt,_ says that great statesman as well as divine, _to try once to awaken a nation that has perhaps forgot past dangers, and yet may be nearer them than ever. If there is any difference between the present state of things and that we were in about thirty years ago, it is that we are now more naked and defenceless, more insensible and stupid, and much more depraved in all respects than we were then. Many are barefacedly going back to that misery, from which God, by such a mighty hand, rescued us, and has hitherto preserved us with an amazing chain of happy providences. *

(* Burnet's *Life and Times*, Introduction to vol. iii.)

Many who refused to take the oaths of allegiance to the late King William, and were therefore suspected of favouring the interest of the Impostor, were advanced to places of great honour and trust. The doctrine of an indefeasible hereditary right was publicly vindicated, both in addresses to her Majesty, and in books dispersed among the people; and the alliance made to secure the protestant succession was in great danger of being broken. Some of the worst parts of popery were revived, and zealously promoted by some of the clergy; and others had the impudence to propose a coalition between the Gallican and English churches. And the better to carry on these designs, the spirit of envy and

persecution was revived among the people; and those encroachments that were made upon the Act of Toleration, *

(* _It is true,_ says Bishop Burnet, in his Pastoral Care, (preface), _many of us opposed the Occasional Bill, from which such things were expected. We thought their own ill designs were under it; we thought it ill-timed; we looked upon it as tending to a breach of the toleration._)

caused some to fear, and others to hope, that in a little time it would be wholly taken away. And the more zealous were hereby encouraged to threaten the Dissenters with demolishing their places of worship, driving their teachers into corners, and banishing out of the land all that dared to dissent from the church.

_So fast did the interests of popery and the a Pretender grow in England, and such reason was there to fear their attempts upon us, that the House of Lords thought it necessary to address her Majesty to issue out her proclamation, promising a reward to any that should bring the Pretender to justice, in case he either landed, or attempted to land, in any of her Majesty_s dominions. And in an address from the same House soon after, (June 24, 1714,) the dangerous condition we were then in was represented to her Majesty in these words:–_And since the papists and Non-jurors are so insolent, as not only to support the Pretender_s claim to your royal crown by their writings and discourses, but also traitorously to enlist men into his service, and send them to France; we most humbly beseech your Majesty to issue out your proclamation, &c._ And many true patriots of our country, as well in church as state, had the courage to give us warning, *

(* _God be thanked,_ says Bishop Burnet, p. 71, _there are many among us that stand upon the watch-towers, and that give faithful warning._)

and represent our great danger to us; assuring us that our civil and religious privileges were just expiring, if God, by some special providence, did not save us;*

(* Burnet_s Spital Sermon, published by order of the Lord Mayor and Court of Aldermen.)

though all that did thus were sure of being publicly discountenanced.

But now what a happy turn is given to all these things! And how wonderfully does the scene of affairs begin to change! Those from whom we thought ourselves in most danger are either removed or have the power of doing mischief taken from them. The public credit is retrieved; the enemies of the protestant succession dare not shew themselves; the hopes of persecutors are turned into despair; and the once grand supporter of popery and tyranny (Louis XIV.) dares not lift up his hand, or give any countenance openly to the mock king. In a word, *The hearts of the righteous are made glad; but the wicked are filled with fear and sorrow.*

1714: The Queen misled by evil Counsellors.

Mr. Stinton refrains from _casting any unjust reflections upon the memory of the late Queen,_ who, he says, _reigned very gloriously over the British nation for many years._ He adds, _The glories of her reign might have shined with the same brightness or greater to the end than at the beginning, had they not been eclipsed by the evil counsel of Ahithophel, (Bolingbroke,) and the base designs which some were carrying on, under a pretended zeal for the church, and concern for the prerogative of the crown. And had God, as our iniquities deserved, suffered them to go on a little further, and given time for

their conceived mischief to have brought forth, what a dreadful scene should we now have had before us! Our civil and religious privileges taken away; our goods and estates confiscated; our posterity left to inherit nothing but popery and slavery; and a civil but bloody war must have commenced in the nation!

But God, who has often raised us, by his kind Providence, interposed yet once more in our favour; and upon the demise of her Majesty, (who herself began to make some change,) all their counsels are turned into foolishness, and their deep-laid schemes overthrown. The protestant succession immediately takes place; the regency is put into the hands of wise and faithful ministers; and his excellent Majesty King GEORGE is proclaimed throughout the whole kingdom, with the greatest joy and satisfaction. The hopes of the Pretender are entirely cut off; no foreign power daring yet to give him assistance; and all Europe are waiting to see what great effects will follow such an unexpected change.

1714: Character of Queen Anne.

The following description of Queen Anne, by Crosby, appears so candid and just, that I with pleasure transcribe it:—_Thus died this great and excellent Princess, who, though she may have been misled into some prejudices and mistakes, in the latter part of her reign, yet, I think, could not herself have any share in the counsels which were then on foot against the protestant succession.._

As to the internal state of our churches at this period, some tolerable judgment may be formed from the following extracts from two circular letters of the Western Association; the first written in June, 1714, and the other in July, 1715, by which time the Rebellion had broken out in the kingdom, to attempt the overthrow of the protestant succession, in the illustrious House of Hanover.

The predictions of their faithful watchmen, just before the close of the former reign, appeared to be now fulfilling; and God, whom they had so wearied with their abominations, appeared to be about to take his fan in his hand, and thoroughly to purge his floor. But He, who passeth by the transgressions of the remnant of his heritage, because he delighteth in mercy, was pleased again to stay his rough wind in the day of his east wind, and in the midst of his deserved wrath to manifest undeserved mercy.

1714: Letter of Western Association.

The Association which met at Trowbridge the 19th and 20th of the third month, 1714, sent a Circular letter to the churches, from which the following are extracts,—_None of the churches,_ say they, _are without cause of sorrow and mourning, on account of the great decay of the life and power of religion amongst professors, and of a carnal, worldly spirit taking place, which may justly humble us all before the Lord, for our loss of first love; and full our minds with an awful fear, lest the holy and jealous God should for these things manifest his wrath and full displeasure against his churches, by suffering our enemies to break down the fences of our religious and civil liberties, and to remove his candlesticks out of their places, and suffer the enemies of the Lord Jesus to prevail.

_Therefore we do most earnestly entreat you to join your united cries and prayers with us to the throne of grace, that God would pour down of his Holy Spirit upon his people

abundantly, revive his work on their souls, strengthen our languishing graces, heal our backslidings, recover us out of that lukewarm, carnal, and worldly spirit, that is so highly displeasing to our dear Lord, disappoint all the malicious designs of our enemies, preserve the nation from popery and tyranny, bless her Majesty, direct and overrule the Parliament, and avert the judgments which our abuse of mercy calls for, and which seem to be near approaching upon this nation, and are likely to begin at the house of God. We do not mention these things to fill you with groundless fears and jealousies, but to awaken you to your duties; for without willfully shutting our eyes, we cannot but apprehend the cloud arising, the storm gathering, the heavens darkening over us, and our God withdrawing those influences of his Holy Spirit, that some time past we and others of his people enjoyed. And therefore we persuade ourselves that all the churches in association will most readily join with us in a day of solemn fasting and prayer, and in private as well as public, implore their utmost interest at the throne of grace, daily, for the continuance of the divine blessing and favour, and bless the gospel with great success._

1714: Letters of Western Association.

In the letter of July 1715 above referred to, these excellent and pious Ministers say, _We beseech you to consider what a sad return of gratitude it will be to our good and gracious God for the many and great salvations he hath so wonderfully wrought out for us, to lose our first love, and to decay in the practice of piety; to grow carnal, worldly, and lukewarm, under the signal and distinguishing favours of the Lord. You may remember what surprising apprehensions we had of the designs of our and the nation_s enemies, against our civil and religious privileges about twelve months since, and you cannot forget how the Lord did appear for us in time of distress and fear; and by a marvellous providence had disappointed our enemies, outdone our faith, and prevented our fears! And we must acknowledge that we are a people served by the arm of the Lord alone; and our enemies saw the finger of God, and sat still as a people astonished at what God had done, though now like Pharaoh they are enraged, and seem resolved to retrieve what they have lost. But though Pharaoh and his host are dead, there are Amalek, Moab, Ammon and Mount Sier, yet to be resisted. The present rage the enemies of our holy profession discover, the malice and envy they shew, put us in mind we are not so safe, but if we provoke God by our unholy walking, he may bring us again into such circumstances that we may see we have need of the help of our God again,_ &c.

They also agreed at this Association to recommend a day of solemn prayer and thanksgiving to all the Western Churches: the following is the resolution, viz. _Upon the request of divers Churches, being truly sensible with us of the great salvation and deliverance God hath wrought for these nations, and for his people in them; and the rage of our enemies under their disappointments; we readily concur with them, and doubt not you will agree with us that a solemn day of prayer and thanksgiving be observed by all the churches in Association with us, to bless our most gracious God for hearing and so seasonably answering the prayers of his people; and earnestly to pray for the King, viz. that God may direct his council, bless the parliament, disappoint the designs of the nation_s enemies abroad and at home, revive the work of reformation in these nations, and the power of godliness amongst his people, send forth more labourers into his harvest, and bless the gospel with great success,_ &c.

1714: Reflections on the Reign of Queen Anne.

From these extracts it is evident, that the Baptist Ministers and Churches, both in town and country, when their principles of attachment to the government were sorely tried, proves themselves firm friends to protestantism and constitutional liberty. They, too, were the people who interceded with God on behalf of a sinful and infidel nation, that was meditating and encouraging such vile oppressive measures against those who were *the quiet in the land*,_ and who desired nothing from the government but that which no government on earth has a right to withhold, to be left unmolested while they were worshipping God according to their conscience, and training up their children in the way wherein they thought they should go. Had the Queen attended to the _humble supplication_ of the whole body of Dissenters, she would have gained immortal honour as their deliverer, and as having _come to the kingdom for such a time as that;_ but as she refused it, they found _help and deliverance from another place._

The sentiments of the protestant Dissenters respecting the fatal measures pursued by Queen Anne, and the prospects they indulged from the accession of the Royal Family of Brunswick to the throne, are elegantly expressed by Dr. Watts, in one of his Lyric Poems.

_PALINODA

_Britons forgive the forward muse

That dar_d prophetic seals to loose, *

(* Alluding to a poem addressed to the Queen at the beginning of her reign.)

(Unskill_d in fate_s eternal book,)

And the deep characters mistook:

GEORGE is the name, that glorious star!

Ye saw his splendours beaming far;—

Saw in the east your joys arise,

When ANNA sunk in *Western* skies,

Striking the heavens with crimson gloom,

Emblems of tyranny and *Rome*,

Portending blood and night to come;

_Twas GEORGE diffused a vital ray,

And gave the dying victims day.
His influence soothes the *Russian Bear*,
Calms rising wars, and heals the air;
Join'd with the sun, his beams are hurl'd,
To scatter blessings round the world,
Fulfil whate'er the muse has spoke,
And crown the work that ANNE forsook.

August 1, 1721.

VOLUME III.

BOOK 1.

CHAP. III.

REIGN OF GEORGE I.

1714-1727

The death of Queen Anne, says Crosby, _and the succession of the illustrious House of Hanover, occasioned a very great, but happy change in this kingdom, and gave new life to the protestant interest throughout Europe._ The same day that the Queen died, the celebrated Duke of Marlborough, who had resigned his command, and who for several years had been driven from the Queen_s councils, landed at Dover. _On Wednesday the 4th of August, his Grace,_ says Crosby, _consented to make a kind of public entry into London. This was at the desire of several Noblemen and eminent Citizens, who as it were compelled him to do so. The Member for the borough of Southwark, Sir Charles Cox, who had been much distinguished for his zeal in the protestant cause, with about two hundred substantial inhabitants, many of whom were Baptists, met his Grace on horseback, and attended him through the borough._ It was intended that the entrance of his Majesty, *George the First*, should be graced by a large body of English gentlemen, who proposed to ride upon white horses, bare-headed, with white camblet cloaks, and with a nosegay in their tight hand composed of an orange inclosed with laurel; the first, an emblem of King William_s having procured for England the protestant succession in the family of Hanover; the latter, as a compliment to the victories of the Duke of Marlborough, which had prepared the way for that happy event. _But,_ says Crosby,

_they were prevented in the execution of their purpose by his Majesty_s, not too soon, but unexpected, happy arrival._

1714: Meeting of the Ministers of the Three Denominations.

The protestant Dissenting Ministers in London were immediately on the alert to devise the best means for testifying their loyalty to the King. On August 4th, a letter was sent to several of the Baptist Ministers, by the Rev. Mr. Tong, of Salters_ Hall, desiring them to meet some of the Presbyterian and Independent Ministers on the ensuing Monday, at Hamlin_s Coffee-house. At the meeting Mr. Tong said, _that as there had been formerly a committee of the three denominations of Dissenters, to consult of public affairs for the good of the whole body, it was thought convenient, and was desired by several persons, that that committee should be revived._ To this all who were present cordially agreed. It was then proposed to the Baptist Ministers, as two of their former committee (Mr. Joseph Stennett and Mr. John Piggott) were dead, that they should consult the Ministers of their denomination to choose two others in their stead, to meet the committee when it should assemble.

1714: Meeting of the Society of Baptist Ministers.

The same afternoon, this matter was represented to the society of Baptist Ministers, who met weekly at the Hanover Coffee-house, Finch Lane. The revival of the committee met their approbation, and Mr. Richard Allen and Mr. Benjamin Stinton were appointed instead of the late lamented Messrs. Stennett and Piggott. At this meeting it was said, that the deceased brethren had been often reflected upon for acting as the representatives of the whole body of Baptist Ministers in London, including those of the General Baptist churches, when they were chosen exclusively by the Particular Baptist Ministers. Therefore, to prevent such unpleasant feelings in future, and for the purpose of cultivating a better understanding with the General Baptist Ministers, Mr. Allen and Mr. Stinton proposed to summon the whole body of Baptist Ministers, both general and particular, to meet at the Hanover Coffee-house on the following Wednesday. When they were assembled, they were told that the design of the meeting was to ascertain, whether they approved of acting in conjunction with the other Dissenting Ministers as formerly; to choose persons to represent them in the committee; and to agree upon terms for a better union and correspondence between themselves.

1715: Union of London Baptist Ministers.

The first subject occasioned some debating. The question was then put from the chair, _Whether the Baptists should continue to act in conjunction with the other denominations of Dissenters in addressing the King, or in any other thing which related to the public interest of the whole?_ This passed in the affirmative. They then agreed to confirm the choice of the three Ministers who had been previously appointed by the Particular Baptists. In relation to the proposal for effecting a closer union and correspondence between the General and Particular Baptists, this was unanimously approved; and they agreed to meet again on that day month, to consider further on the subject. At the

appointed meeting for that purpose it was agreed, that it would greatly tend to maintain affection, and promote friendly correspondence, that such a meeting should be kept once a month, to be attended by the elders, or pastors only. Mr. Jenkins, a General Baptist Minister, was chosen secretary, and several resolutions for the useful conducting of such a meeting were agreed to. Crosby adds, _But this laudable and good design soon dwindled and came to nothing. Why? Because it was the result of ecclesiastics only, who are rarely found to be good politicians. Had they joined with themselves one or two from each of their churches of the most prudent and moderate of their laity, I doubt not but a glorious harmony and good correspondence would have continued with them till now. Let them but try the experiment. The whole Baptist interest united in such a manner, must consequently tend very much to its reputation and increase._

From this statement it will appear, that this monthly meeting of the united body of Baptist Ministers was but of short continuance. Whether the laconic reason assigned by our historian was the only cause of its dwindling away and coming to nothing, the reader must judge. Mr. Crosby, was a member and a deacon of the church in which Mr. Benjamin Stinton, brother-in-law to Mr. Crosby, had succeeded their excellent father-in-law, Mr. Benjamin Keach. He might probably be one of _the most prudent and moderate of the laity; _and everybody knows that prudence and moderation in a deliberating assembly are always valuable, and, it cannot be denied, have sometimes been greatly needed, not only by ecclesiastics, but even by laymen, notwithstanding they may have considered themselves as good politicians.

1714: General Body address the King.

The Committee of the Three Denominations of Protestant Dissenting Ministers, lost no time in preparing an address of congratulations to be presented to the King. The whole body of ministers were convened to hear the proposed address, and they cordially approved and signed it. The Rev. Dr. Williams was chosen to present it; and it was agreed upon that every minister should accompany him to court, at the time when the Secretary of State should have informed them, that his Majesty would graciously condescend to receive them.

His Majesty_s having signified his willingness to receive them, the whole body attended at court, at St. James_s, September 28, 1714. They were introduced by his Grace the Duke of Devonshire, and had the honour to kiss his Majesty_s hand. They were afterwards introduced to George, Prince of Wales, by the Duke of Argyle, and also kissed the hand of the Prince.

The address presented by the Rev. Dr. Williams, with his Majesty_s answer, appeared in the Gazette of Saturday, October 2, 1714, and are as follows.

TO THE KING_S MOST EXCELLENT MAJESTY.

_The humble Address of the Protestant Dissenting Ministers, of the several Denominations in and about the city of London, &c.

_May it please your Majesty,

_With thankfulness and joy, equal to the great occasion, we congratulate your Majesty's peaceful accession to the throne, and your own and the Prince's safe arrival, the merciful return of many ardent prayers.

When we recollect your Majesty's descent from the King and Queen of Bohemia, those renowned patrons of the *protestant* religion, we cannot but adore the divine providence which has now rewarded their sufferings for that cause, in their royal offspring, with a crown, that renders your Majesty the head of the whole *protestant* interest. But your Majesty's zeal for the same religion, your known affection for the *liberties of Europe*, and the rights of mankind, with your other celebrated virtues, give us the surest prospect, that the blessings of your reign will be as extensive as your power.

_The parliamentary entail of the crown upon your illustrious house, we have ever esteemed one of the greatest blessings procured for us, by our late glorious deliverer King William, of immortal memory. *To this happy settlement we have constantly adhered against all temptations and dangers. Our zeal herein has been owned to be very conspicuous, by those noble patriots who now surround your throne.*

_We hold no principles, but what do in conscience oblige us to acknowledge your Majesty for our only lawful and rightful Sovereign; and to do everything in our power to support your title and government against all pretenders whatsoever.

_Your Majesty's wise and gracious declaration, for which we render our unfeigned thanks, does sensibly relieve us under our present hardships, and gives us ground to hope, that as we are inseparably united in interest and safety, with all that adhere to the succession and monarchy as by law established, so we shall share in that protection and favour, which will make us happy with the rest of your subjects.

We shall constantly pray, for the long life and prosperity of your Majesty, for their Royal Highnesses the Prince and Princess of Wales, and all the branches of your august family. May that God, by whom kings reign, help you to employ your mighty power and interest, that it may be your Majesty's glory to protect the *protestant* religion, to suppress the profaneness of the age, to heal the divisions of your people, to assert the rights of the injured abroad, and to preserve the balance of Europe.

1714: His Majesty's Answer.

To this Address his Majesty returned this most gracious Answer.

_I AM VERY WELL PLEASED WITH YOUR EXPRESSIONS OF DUTY TO ME,
AND YOU MAY DEPEND UPON HAVING MY PROTECTION._

1715: Liberal Principles of George I.

The declaration of his Majesty, referred to by the Ministers, was the following, which the King made in council, September 22, being the first time of his sitting in it.

I take this occasion also to express to you, my firm purpose to do all that is in my power, for supporting and maintaining the Churches of England and Scotland, as they are severally by law established; which I am of opinion may be EFFECTUALLY done WITHOUT THE LEAST IMPAIRING THE TOLERATION, ALLOWED BY LAW TO PROTESTANT DISSENTERS, so agreeable to Christian charity, and so necessary to the trade and riches of the kingdom.

The good understanding which now prevailed between the Baptists and Paedobaptists in London, was put to the test by the following circumstance; and it is mentioned to the honour of the Presbyterian Ministers, who had on many occasions been zealous in their opposition to the Baptists.

Mr. Joseph Stokes, a Presbyterian Minister at Horsham in Sussex, published in the year 1714, a little pamphlet in defence of infant baptism, entitled, *_A Survey of Infant Baptism, and the Mode of Baptizing._* Of this pamphlet the author endeavoured to procure a recommendation to the public, by the Rev. Dr. Williams, and some others of the most noted Presbyterian Ministers in London; but he was told by them, *_That seeing things at present were quiet, and there was a good correspondence and harmony between the two denominations, they thought it not proper to do any thing that might tend to disturb and break it._*

1715: Origin of Maze-pond school.

This friendly intercourse soon after led to another happy event, namely, the establishment of the Protestant Dissenters' School upon Horselydown, which still exists in prosperous circumstances, and is known by the name of the Maze-pond School.

The following circumstances led to the establishment of this School. The Church of England had several charity schools in the Borough, in which the children who belonged to them were necessarily constrained to learn the Church Catechism, and to attend the established church. It was known that particular pains had been taken to prejudice the children against the principles and persons of Dissenters. Also many poor but pious Dissenters had been influenced to send their children to them, for the sake of their obtaining the advantage of clothing, &c. though they knew their children were in danger of being taught to despise them on account of their religious opinions.

The Presbyterians had one or two charity schools in London, but in these the Assembly's Catechism was taught, so that the children of Baptists were compelled to learn sentiments, even in dissenting schools, on the subject of baptism, which their parents disapproved. Mr. Benjamin Stinton had been very desirous of founding a free school before the death of the late Queen, but the spirit of the times would not admit of the attempt.

After her death he consulted Mr. John Sladen, an Independent. Some of the Ministers in the Borough thought with Mr. Stinton that it was necessary to do what they could for redressing these grievances, of which they had long complained; and that while they separated from others, for the sake of maintaining religious sentiments which they thought more agreeable to the word of God, they ought not to be behind them in the works of charity: they therefore resolved to establish a *Protestant Dissenting School*, upon such principles that Dissenters of all denominations might unite in its support.

To carry this design into effect, it was agreed that six Ministers, three Baptists, and three Paedobaptists, should unite in preaching a Lord's-day evening lecture at Mr. Stinton's Meeting house in Horselydown. There were of the Baptists the Rev. Messrs. Benjamin Stinton, Edward Wallin, and Richard Parkes: the Independents were the Rev. Messrs. Isaac Maudits, John Killinghall, and John Sladen.

1714: Principles of the School.

This measure was so warmly recommended by the ministers, and so cordially approved by their friends, that a subscription of more than ?100 per annum was soon raised. The subscribers were summoned to a general meeting, and the six ministers, and six lay gentlemen, three of whom were Baptists, were appointed managers for the year: these were Messrs. Abr. Atkins, Thomas Hall, Luke Leader, John Sweet, William Dell, and John Valley.

They determined that the school should be composed of forty boys, who were to be annually clothed, and to be under the care of a master, at L35 per year. The master was to be a protestant Dissenter; and was, in addition to instructing them in reading, writing, and arithmetic, to pray with the scholars morning and evening, and to teach them the principles of the Christian religion, and singing of psalms. The parents were required to engage, that they would take care their children should attend some Dissenting place of worship on the mornings and afternoons of the Lord's-days, and attend with the master the lectures in the evening. A Meeting-house, in Fair Street, which had been used by the Presbyterians, was taken and converted into a school room, and dwelling house for the master; and Mr. Robert Baker, an occasional teacher of Mr. Stinton's church, was unanimously chosen to that office.

The rules, &c. were published at length by Crosby, for which he assigns the following reasons. _This being,_ he says, _the first public charity-school in which the Baptists were an equal part of the constitution, as well as one of the most *catholic* foundations of any yet in England; and because some great attempts have been made by the Presbyterians, though without success, to change the constitution; made me think it necessary to erect a monument thereunto, by giving it a place in this history, that after ages may know upon what foundation the same was constituted._ The only peculiarity in the constitution of this school, and which at that time excited so much the zeal of its supporters, was the ninth article; _That a catechism be printed for the use of the school, agreeing with the Assembly's Catechism, the 95th question and answer, referring to the subject of

BAPTISM *being left out!* They accordingly printed a catechism with that omission only, _approved of, for the use of the charity school at Horselydown, Southwark._

The annual sermon was first preached by the Rev. Matthew Clark, at Pinner_s Hall, on the 20th of October, 1714, the day of his Majesty_s coronation. The collection after the sermon amounted to 28 l. 14 s.

1714: Minister from Scotland baptized.

About this time the attention of the Baptist London ministers was directed towards Scotland, in consequence of a Mr. Thomas Lowrey, a licentiate preacher of the church of Scotland, having been baptized, and admitted a member of the church in Spitalfields. This minister produced his licence signed by the moderator of the assembly at Peebles, and three other letters from ministers of his acquaintances, as testimonials of his Christian character. He informed the ministers, that he had for several years been dissatisfied with infant baptism, and that there were several Presbyterian Ministers in Scotland of the same mind with himself on the subject of believers_ baptism. After several of the Ministers had heard him preach, and were satisfied with his knowledge of the gospel, and ability for preaching it, they proposed to the society which met monthly at the Hanover Coffee-house, that _on account of Mr. Lowrey_s Scotch pronunciation, he should return to Scotland to promote the doctrine and practice of believers_ baptism in that kingdom; where none had been heard of who had openly professed it, though several stood well affected towards it._ The design was approved, and it was agreed to provide for his support for one year; but at the time fixed upon for his departure, he was visited by a dangerous sickness. Crosby says, _that he was not acquainted with the issue of this business._

1715: The Rebellion.

In order to preserve the line of our history, it will now be necessary to advert to what was alluded to in the last chapter, viz. the attempt which was made to overthrow the government by substituting the rejected popish family of Stuart, instead of the protestant House of Hanover. Many of the disappointed Tory Lords joined in the design, and promoted a rebellion in favour of the Pretender. This was in the beginning of the year 1715. We notice it not for the purpose of giving a full history, but because it serves to illustrate the principles and actions of the English Baptists. It is extremely gratifying to find, with what ardent zeal and distinguished loyalty the protestant Dissenters adhered to the House of Brunswick, and how warmly their writers of that period eulogize the first British King of that illustrious house. The following quotation is taken from Crosby.

_By a concurrence of wonderful providences, it pleased God to give a quiet and peaceable accession to his most gracious Majesty to the throne of his ancestors, to which he was received with one full voice, and consent of tongue and heart, and the united joy of every good subject and good Protestant, as their only lawful and rightful Sovereign. But although from the moment his Majesty ascended the throne, his reign had been one series of wisdom, justice, and clemency; his labours constant, unwearied, and successful, to retrieve the honour and reputation of these nations, to establish the trade, and recover

the wealth of these kingdoms;—and although all imaginable encouragement had been given to the Church of England, and all tenderness shewn, even to his popish subjects, and his constant care had been to procure the universal good of his people; yet to delude, disorder, and corrupt the minds of his Majesty's good subjects, the most groundless jealousies were fomented against his wise and happy administration; and in many parts of his kingdom, the most unnatural, unexampled riots and tumults were stirred up and encouraged against his peaceable protestant subjects, under false pretences of zeal for the Church of England. _The cry of these infuriated bigots was, _The Church is in danger;—_No foreigners;—_No Presbyterians;—_King James III. &c. The Baptists had two Meeting-houses demolished at this time. One was at Oxford, *

(* It was a dwelling-house near the castle; one room of which was appropriated for worship, Crosby vol. iv. p. 137.)

at which city they also destroyed those of the Presbyterians and Quakers; the other Baptist place was at Wrexham in Derbyshire.

The united body of protestant Dissenting Ministers in London were forward in testifying their attachment to the King and his government, and prepared an Address, which was presented by Mr. Nathaniel Hodges, a Baptist Minister, *

(* _It was not thought proper, _ says Crosby, _for the whole body of ministers to go up with this Address, as on his Majesty's accession to the throne, but four of each denomination were chosen for that purpose.)

who was introduced to his Majesty by the Duke of Newcastle, Aug. 16, 1715. The Address and his Majesty's answer were published in the Gazette of the next day. They are as follows:—

TO THE KING'S MOST EXCELLENT MAJESTY.

_May it please your Majesty,

_We, your majesty's most loyal subjects, think ourselves obliged in duty and gratitude humbly to acknowledge that seasonable protection which your Majesty has been pleased to give to those of our persuasion, from the late *rebellious tumults*; and for your gracious answer to the Address of your *faithful Commons*, wherein they desire, that a full compensation be made to those, whose sufferings they so justly impute to their zeal and firm adherence to your Majesty, and to your government. We can assure your Majesty, that no just occasion has been given by us to our fellow-subjects for any such treatment; nor can the principles which oblige us to dissent from the Church of England be a reasonable provocation to any who have the least regard to the common rights of mankind, as the rules of the Christian religion.

We desire nothing more than to enjoy our civil rights, with a just liberty; to profess our own religious sentiments, which we take to be a privilege *due to all men*. We have been always ready to assist the Church of England in defence of the *protestant* religion, when in real and imminent danger; being agreed with them, and all protestant churches, in those principles that began the Reformation, and which can alone justify and support it.

_When there has been a design to introduce *popery* and an *arbitrary power*, the *protestant Dissenters* have generally been first attacked. Nor know we any other reason why we have now suffered the outrage if *Papists*, *Non-jurors*, and other disaffected persons, but that they were sure we were a body of men, fixed in our duty to your

Majesty, and lay the most exposed to popular insults, against which your Majesty, and your two Houses of Parliament, in your great wisdom and goodness, have given us a seasonable, and, as we hope, an effectual security for time to come.

_Whilst your Majesty_s government is disturbed at home, and threatened with an invasion from abroad, we can answer for those of our persuasion, that there are not any of them, whose principles and inclinations will not influence them to assist and support your Majesty and the protestant religion to the utmost of their power. We look upon ourselves as bound by the strongest ties of duty, gratitude, and interest, to acknowledge and maintain your Majesty_s undoubted right and title to the imperial crown of these realms; and to declare our utmost abhorrence of all attempts, either at home or abroad, in favour of a *popish Pretender*. May that gracious providence, which has so signally appeared in bringing your Majesty to the throne of these kingdoms, continue to protect and defend your royal person and family against all the attempts of your open and secret enemies._

1715: The King_s Answer.

HIS MAJESTY_S MOST GRACIOUS ANSWER.

_I AM VERY MUCH CONCERNED AT THE UNCHRISTIAN AND BARBAROUS TREATMENT WHICH THOSE OF YOUR PERSUASION HAVE MET WITH IN SEVERAL PARTS OF MY KINGDOM; AND CARE SHALL BE TAKEN THAT A FULL COMPENSATION SHALL BE MADE THEM FOR THEIR SUFFERINGS. I THANK YOU FOR THIS ADDRESS, AND YOU MAY BE ASSURED OF MY PROTECTION."

The very full and unequivocal answer which was returned to this Address, provoked the high church party exceedingly; and therefore some attempts were made to expose it; and those who had presented it. A specimen of this rancorous and abusive spirit is to be found in the _Weekly Journal,_ a Tory newspaper, which states as follows:– _The same day an

Address was made to his Majesty by the whole body of Dissenting Ministers, viz.

Presbyterians, Independents, and Anabaptists; the latter of which, it being in their turn, had the honour to present it; and they chose Mr. Hodges to perform that ceremony. The names of the other Anabaptists are, Mr. Stinton, Mr. Jenkins, Mr. Allen, and Mr. Noble, who, though they were all formerly of very mean occupations, have, since their call, been looked upon as the most eminent preachers among that dipping set of people, _ &c.

Crosby supposes the cause of all this contemptuous ribaldry was, that the King had said, *_I am very much concerned at the unchristian and barbarous treatment which those of your profession have met with._* Opportunities have sometimes occurred, when rulers have been able to ascertain the just characters of their subjects; when *actions*, and not *professions*, have been the test by which they have been tried.

It is very pleasing to know that there was not one protestant Dissenter that joined in this unnatural rebellion. The author wishes he could say as much respecting the members of the Church of England; but a faithful regard to truth prevents it. At the conclusion of the speech of the Lord High Chancellor, made to the six condemned Lords, previous to their sentence, he says, _I must be so just to such of your lordships as profess the religion of the *Church of Rome*, that you had one temptation, and that a great one, to engage you in this treason, which the others had not; in that it was evident, success on your part must

for ever have established popery in this kingdom, and that probably you could never have again so fair an opportunity. But then, how must those *Protestants* be covered with confusion, who entered into the same measures without so much as capitulating for their religion, (that ever I could find from any examination I have seen or heard,) or so much as requiring, much less obtaining, a frail promise that it should be preserved, or even tolerated!_

1715: Baptism of Rev. Jonathan Owen.

On returning to the history of our churches, we find that an instance is recorded in this year, of an Independent Minister in London embracing the sentiments of the Baptists. This was Mr. Jonathan Owen, who had been pastor of a large congregational church in Deadman's Place, Southwark. He was, it is said, a minister of good report, and had been much esteemed for his solid and orthodox preaching. He was now 60 years of age, and was baptized by Mr. Richard Adams, August 18, 1715. After his baptism he preached from Rom. 1:18;—*Who hold the truth in unrighteousness*. He acknowledged in this sermon that he had for several years been guilty of this sin, by stifling the convictions which had felt that infant baptism could not be supported by the Scriptures. He stated, that he had lately looked more into the controversy by reading Dr. Gale's Reply to Dr. Wall's *History of Infant Baptism*, and that having consulted the Scriptures, and prayed for divine direction, he had been fully convinced that baptism was to be administered only to believers, and was only to be performed by immersion.

The sensation produced among some of the old friends of Mr. Owen, may be judged of, from some of the ministers, and others who had attended his baptism, thinking it necessary to publish the following statement:—

—Whereas, we are informed that a report is spread abroad, that when Mr. Jonathan Owen, late Independent Minister, was baptized by immersion, he was in great danger of his life, and that there was but an inch between him and death, (as they express it,)—We, whose names are underwritten, being present at the administration, do testify, that the said report is utterly false, and that his baptism was performed with great decency and safety; and immediately after, Mr. Owen himself both prayed and preached to the spectators present.

Witness our hands,

RICHARD ADAMS, Administrator,

MARK KEY, *Pastors

BENJAMIN STINTON *

HUMPHREYS,

*Deacons

MATTHEWS *

—
To conclude this account of Mr. Owen, we add, that he soon afterwards visited Bristol for the purpose of assisting the venerable Andrew Gifford, at the Pithay. This aged minister had reached his 74th year, and was removed about six years afterwards. As a testimonial to the character and talents of Mr. Owen, the London ministers sent a letter, of which the following is an extract:—

—We whose names are underwritten think ourselves bound, in answer to your desire, and in justice to Mr. Owen, to give you the following account.

—He has for many years been a Paedobaptist minister, amongst those of the congregational persuasion, and for a considerable time had the care of a large and flourishing church of that denomination; and always, to the best of our knowledge, behaved himself suitably to his holy profession as a Christian, and his character as a minister. He has of late publicly *renounced his infant baptism*; and was, on the 18th of August, 1715, baptized by our honoured brother Mr. Richard Adams, in presence of several other ministers; since which he has received the Lord's Supper with the church meeting in Devonshire-square, and preached to divers of our congregations with approbation. We hope he may be very serviceable to the interest of Christ, particularly of *that truth* by which we are distinguished. We conclude with our hearty prayers that the Lord may bless and succeed your labours together; and we commend both him and you unto God, and the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified; and remain

Your brethren in the faith and fellowship of the gospel,

RICHARD ADAMS,
BENJAMIN STINTON,
EDWARD WALLIN,
NATHANIEL HODGES,—

And others.

In this year the Committee of the general body of Dissenting Ministers was increased, two of each denomination being added to the number. Those for the Baptists were, Mr. Abraham Mulliner, of the General Baptists, and Mr. John Noble of the Particular Baptists.

1715: American Baptists

At this period the Baptists in Pennsylvania opened a correspondence with the ministers of London. When it is considered to what a multitude the Baptists have increased in America, during little more than a century from that time, it is curious to see from what small beginnings they have arisen; and it is pleasing to reflect upon the assistance that was then afforded them by some of our worthy brethren, the particulars of which are worth preserving.

The following is an extract of a letter written by Mr. Abel Morgan, dated Philadelphia, August 12, 1714:— We are now nine churches, having, for the better assisting one the other, four general meeting; 1. At Welch Tract, which all the Pennsylvanian churches resort to in May. 2. At Cohonsay, for conveniency of those parts, where Philadelphia assists. 3. At Middleton, where also Philadelphia assists. 4. At Philadelphia, in the month of September, to which all do resort, and where most of the public matters are settled, by messengers from each particular church.

—In these churches there are about five hundred members, but who are greatly scattered on this main land. Our ministers are necessitated to labour with their hands. We hope, if it please God to supply us with more help, we shall be more churches in a little time. Most churches administer the sacrament once a month. These ministers are all sound in the faith; and we practise most things like the British churches,—

Another letter was received from these Ministers, dated July 20, 1715, wherein they gave a particular account of the beginning and progress of the Gospel in those parts, the

present number of their churches, the names and circumstances of their ministers, &c.; and desired to keep up a correspondence with the English Baptist ministers, and particularly those in London, requesting also that they might be assisted with books, &c. _for the preservation and further promoting of the truth in those parts._ The ministers having laid the letter before their congregations, two generous gentlemen, Mr. Thomas Hollis, and Mr. John Taylor, gave a supply of books: Mr. Hollis sent twelve copies of Mr. Burkitt's Annotations on the New Testament, directing that each minister in those parts might have a copy; and Mr. John Taylor gave 20 l. worth of old books, and several copies of the Baptist Catechism. This present was accompanied with the following letter:—

1716: American Correspondence.

_To the Elders and Churches of Jesus Christ, in Pennsylvania, in America, baptized upon profession of their faith, the Elders of the Baptized Churches in and about London, send greeting.

—Honoured and beloved Brethren,

—We received yours of the 20th of July, 1715, and were not a little pleased with the particular account you therein give us of the beginning and progress of the gospel in those parts of the world, and of the number and present state of the churches, for which we return you our hearty thanks. We have not all had opportunity yet to read it in our several congregations, but design so to do at a convenient time. We rejoice to hear of your welfare, and bless God that he has enabled you, by his grace, to stand fast in the truth against all opposition; and that after so many troubles and temptations, most of you are settled again in peace, and are blessed with an able and successful ministry. May you continually go on with the same zeal and courage, and we shall not fail to offer up our sincere prayers to God for your farther establishment in the faith and comforts of the gospel. And as we have abundant reason to believe the representations you make, of the difficulties and hardships which you still labour under; so we assure you of our readiness to do any thing in our power for the advancement of the gospel, and promoting the truths of Jesus Christ among you.

—We have recommended your case to two generous gentlemen, Mr. Thomas Hollis and Mr. John Taylor, who have for your present encouragement sent over a parcel of books, which we hope will come safe to your hands, and be distributed as they have directed.

—As for a fund for the support of the ministry, we have not been able to raise any such thing for the benefit of the churches in England, though our interest has suffered very much in some parts of this kingdom for want of it; so that there cannot at present be anything of this nature expected. However, if it should please God to bless our churches with rich and generous members, *we should gladly encourage a fund for promoting the gospel in foreign parts, as we find there is among some other denominations of Protestants.* For the present we heartily embrace your proposal of keeping up a correspondence by letters, and shall be very ready to negotiate any affairs for you, relating to the interest of religion, either with particular persons or the government. —We hope you enjoy a full liberty for the exercise of your religion, and live in peace and amity with the other denominations of Dissenters, as, blessed be God, we do here, and have a hopeful prospect of its continuance. And we recommend it to you as our advice, that you would endeavour after as great a union and correspondence with those of different

persuasions as the truths you profess will admit of; but especially that you carefully maintain love and union among yourselves, and keep up your associate meetings for that purpose. And now, brethren, we commend you to God and the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified; and remain,

Your brethren in the faith and fellowship of the gospel,

[Signed by the General Body of Baptist Ministers, assembling monthly at the Hanover Coffee-house, Finch-lane.]

London, January 4, 1716-17.

P.S. Please to direct your letters to Mr. Benjamin Stinton, at Horselydown, in Southwark._

This correspondence was maintained for some time; but it is probable that the premature and lamented death of Mr. Benjamin Stinton brought it to a termination. There are two other letters from the brethren in America, preserved by Crosby, which show how greatly the present of books sent them the year before had affected their minds with pious gratitude and Christian affection.

_The Church of Christ at Philadelphia, in Pennsylvania, baptized upon profession of faith, to the Elders of the Baptized Churches in and about London, especially those concerned lately in writing to us, send Christian salutations.

_Beloved Brethren,

_Yours of the 4th of January last came to hand, with the books from our esteemed brethren, Mr. Hollis and Mr. Taylor; for which beneficence we return our hearty thanks, on behalf of all interested in the benefit of the same. Having seen but few of our brethren abroad, we thank you for recommending our case to the above worthy benefactors. We likewise thank them for their generosity in bestowing liberally; but above all we thank our good God that brought us to the fellowship of his Son, and hath with him given us all good things to enjoy. We take this donation of books as a token of Divine favour, regarding us in our low estate. We trust, and hope, and wait also, for the return of the smiles of God_s face unto us, and that he will yet bless us, not utterly forsaking us, though we are but a remnant. Many have fallen like untimely fruit; but, notwithstanding, we are preserved to this day. Give God glory on our behalf.

_We do assure you, that your letter and books have met with welcome entertainment among us in general. The seasonableness thereof has much revived our spirits, and tended much to cement us in this city in love, it being as sun-shine upon the dispersion of a cloud. The particulars of the one and the other we judge proper to defer, though we cannot look back upon them without amazement.

_Your letter was read in our meetings in town and country. We concluded that the books might be disposed of as intended; the family books for the benefit of well-disposed folks; the annotations to be for particular qualified persons. The other books for public use, for our leading brethren to resort to, are lodged here in the city, to be lent and returned again; whereby the rising generation may have the benefit of them as well as the present. The contents of the letters, and a catalogue of the books, are recorded in our church-books, to prevent all mistakes.

_The generality of our associated congregations, so far as we know, are in peace; but few additions any where lately, though within a few years past all our churches have increased more or less. The country is overrun with Quakers, who in general will not hear

us; and those who would, dare not by reason of their awfully strict discipline. But God can give another shock to that kingdom which sits as queen here, and which thinks not to see widowhood anymore.

_In this country most of the errors of the ancients have been new dressed over; but through mercy they seem to creep more and more into holes. The errors about the personality of the Holy Ghost, and the non-imputation of original sin, with others, lurk about the tents of some who are denominated Baptists; but they utterly disown us, as we indeed do them. One Hammond_s (a Baptist) book is much in request with some here. What is made of a day famous in Jewry we will leave. But if some substantial informing tracts were in their hands, it is probable things would be otherwise.

_As there is no material alteration since our former letter in the state of our churches, we shall conclude with our hearty love to you all; hoping that as you have been acquainted with our estate, we shall not be forgotten by you in your solemn addresses at a throne of grace, for such blessings and favours as we stand in need of, and that may tend to the glory of God_s name hoping also to have the continuance of the comfortable correspondence so happily begun.

_Not willing to be further tedious in writing, or burdensome in respect to complaints and expectations, we commit you all to God, that can make all blessings abound to you and us; remaining,

Your brethren in the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ,

ABEL MORGAN,

SAMUEL JONES,

WILLIAM KINNERSLEY,

EDWARD CHURCH,

And eight others.

*Philadelphia, September 13, 1717, at our meeting
for business, on behalf of the whole Church.*

P.S. Direct to Abel Morgan, or Edward Church, in Philadelphia._

The letter sent from the Associated churches was this addressed:-

_To our reverend brethren, the elders of the baptized churches in and about London; and our good and generous benefactors, Mr. Hollis, and Mr. Taylor;-we the Elders, Ministers, and Messengers of the churches under the same denomination in Pennsylvania, and the Jerseys in America, met in our General Meeting held at Philadelphia the 22d, and 23d, and 24th of September 1717, send our most hearty salutations.

_Beloved brethren in our Lord Jesus Christ, grace be unto you, and peace from God our Father, through our Lord and Redeemer.

_Your letters we have seen, and the books according to catalogue are come to hand, and by our brethren in the city settled prudently, whereby all of us may have the benefit thereof, that our successors may profit as well as we. The fame of this makes some rumour abroad, and profit at home; so that we hope this good work may bring forth yet more good fruit to the advantage of religion and the glory of God; which we hope will be returned in a hundred fold of benefit to yourselves, according to the seed sown.

_The soundness of the authors in general will be a singular advantage in this country, and what we find otherwise we shall endeavour to distinguish. We think, that the very minds of the people in common here are tainted with *Arminianism*, *Socinianism*, and what not.

The common notion of religion among them is like a leprous house; it is not to be

mended by patching, but must be pulled down and rebuilt upon the right foundation, the covenant of grace. This we labour to do, and therefore go against the current of the times; that others who succeed us may see no cause to lament our having gone before them: and this we will still do, God permitting.

We hope to hear from you the next opportunity that may present. So returning our hearty thanks to you, for the favours already showed us, we remain

Your brethren in the Lord, and in the
Fellowship of the gospel,

THOMAS ABBOTT,
JOHN BURROWS, _

And about nineteen more.

1717: Poor French Ministers.

About this period five of the Baptist congregations made collections in aid of some of the French refugees who had settled in the city after the revocation of the edict of Nantz. The letter which their Ministers sent to the Society of Calvinistic Ministers, at the Hanover Coffee-house, is worthy of being preserved in our history.

_To the Reverend our most honoured Brethren, the Pastors and Ministers of the Baptized Congregations.

_The French ministers banished their native country for the cause of their holy religion, humbly represent to you, that in the year 1696, the Court having suspended for some time the subsistence which used to be granted them, they were obliged to apply themselves to the charity of their most honoured brethren, the ministers of the baptized churches, who kindly helped them in their necessities. At present being afflicted with the same or greater necessities than ever, by having been entirely forsaken for the last two years and a half of the Queen_s reign, and a year and a half of King George_s; they take the liberty again to implore your Christian and brotherly assistance, humbly beseeching you, if there is any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of charity, if any communion of spirit, of any cordial affections, you would complete our joy in assisting us, in such manner as your piety and charity shall judge proper. Our great ages, and continual infirmities, warning us every day of our approaching end, give us just cause to believe, that this shall be the last time we shall address ourselves to you, at least in the like case. In the mean time we pray the Almighty to bless your persons, your families, and your churches, with all blessings, temporal and eternal: which are the ardent and sincere prayers of

----BACON, 77 years old;

FRANCIS GRONGUET, 74 years;

JOHN JAMES SOLIXHAC, 82 years,

SAMUEL VEHARD, 84 years.

Witness, MONS. GOMARE.

London, July 30, 1716._

1716: Bounty of Mr. Thomas Hollis.

The liberality of Mr. Thomas Hollis was expressed at this time towards the poor of several of the churches in London. Mr. Benjamin Stinton was requested by the following

note, dated October 2, 1715, to become the almoner of that worthy gentleman;— _One hundred guineas delivered to Mr. Benjamin Stinton by Thomas Hollis. Mr. Stinton is entreated to pay to the deacons of the several churches underwritten, the sums annexed to their names. And the deacons, are desired to receive it as an extra gift to the poor, with the advice of their minister, and, if they please, to give a list of the names, and how distributed, signed by the deacons, and witnessed by the minister if he please._

It appears from the following list, that they were all of the Particular Baptist denomination. It is highly probable that it is the list of the churches which were in either an annual or monthly Association, though we have no certain data from which to draw that conclusion.

1716: List of Churches assisted.

<i>Churches.</i>	<i>Guineas.</i>	<i>To whom paid.</i>
} MR. HODGES, Artillery-street, Spital- fields	10	MR. GRANGE.
---ALLEN_S, Paul_s-alley, Barbican	10	---DARBY.
---STINTON_S, Goat-street, Horselydown	10	---ATKINS.
---ELLIOT_S, Gravel-lane, Wapping	10	---ALLING.
---WALLIN_S, Flower-de-luce-court	10	---TICKNER.
---NOBLE_S, Tallow-chandlers_ Hall	10	---STAPLES.
---REES_S, Limehouse	5	---BORROWS.
---HARRISON_S, Little-wild street	5	---PERKINS.
} ---PARKES_S, White-street, Collier_s- rents	5	---EATON.
---WILSON_S (EBENEZER), Walbrook	5	---SHARP.
---SKEPP_S, Cripplegate	5	---WATSON
} ---SAVAGE_S, Mill-yard, Goodman_s- fields	5	---HARPER.
---DOUGLASS, Virginia-street	5	---CHAMBERLAIN.
---ADAMS_S, Devonshire-square	5	---TOMS.

1716: Public Baptistery in Barbican.

Thomas Hollis, Esq. and his brother John Hollis, Esq. undertook in the year 1716, to promote another work of public utility to the Baptists in London: this was to procure a convenient baptistery, for the use of all the congregations which should be admitted by the Messrs. Hollis to that privilege.

There had been a place for baptizing for some years before, in Fair Street, Horselydown; but it was not sufficiently large or central for accommodating the spectators who usually attended. It was therefore resolved, that the meeting-house in Barbican, formerly Mr.

John Gosnold_s, and then Mr. Richard Allen_s, would be the most suitable situation. The expenses incurred in making the baptistery, *

(* The description of this Baptistery, as given by Crosby, may be seen vol. ii. p. 225.)

and in repairing the meeting-house, amounted to upwards of 600 pounds; towards which 137 pounds were collected, and the remaining sum of 463 pounds was paid by the above-mentioned gentlemen. The place was finished November 20, 1716.

To regulate the baptizings, a certificate was granted to approved ministers, and a register kept of the names of all persons baptized, and by whom. The charge for the use of the necessary accommodations, attendance, &c. was two shillings for each person baptized.

1716: Public Baptistery in Fair Street.

The next year I find that three Ministers in the borough, Messrs. Foxwell, Stinton, and Wallin, resolved to enlarge and repair the ancient baptizing-place in Horselydown, by erecting a meeting-house, with dressing-rooms adjoining, _for the more decent administration of the ordinance of baptism._ The meeting-house was thirty feet by twenty, and there were three vestries of eleven feet square each. The expense of this measure, with suits of apparel, &c. it was estimated would amount to L130.

The Baptist Ministers sent the following letter to their churches upon this subject, explaining the regulations they had adopted concerning it. The reader will see that it contains some oblique allusions to what they considered an improper management of the Baptistery in Barbican.

_Beloved Brethren,

_It being earnestly desired by several persons, that the ancient baptizing place at Horselydown should be repaired, believing it will be for the interest of the Baptists, and a better accommodation to several of their churches, that there should be two places kept up for that use, as there have been for some years past: And whereas it is designed, that the propriety of this place shall not be lodged in any single person, or in any one community, but that every congregation that shall advance L10 towards the charge of its reparation, shall have a propriety therein equal with others, secured to them by a trustee of their own choosing; and that every congregation who shall advance any less sum, shall be entitled to the free use thereof, without paying more for any persons to be there baptized, than any other the more favoured whatsoever: We have therefore thought it fit, to communicate this design to all the churches, that so every one that approves of it, may have, if they please, the same privilege with ourselves, and an opportunity of joining with us in this good and public undertaking; and take leave to subscribe ourselves,

Your brethren in the faith and

Fellowship of the gospel,

NATHANIEL FOXWELL,

JOHN NOBLE,_

And others.

The following list of churches, while it shows by whom the money was contributed, serves to throw some light on the state of the churches at that period, if we are to estimate the number of persons in their congregations, or the ability of their members, by the amount of their contributions.

	?.	s.	d.
MR. NATHANIEL FOXWELL_S, Fair-street 20		0	0
---BENJAMIN STINTON_S, Goat-street 20		0	0
---EDWARD WALLIN_S, Flower-de-luce- 20		0	0
court			
---MARK KEYE_S, Devonshire-square 10		0	0
---JOHN NOBLE_S, Tallow-chandlers_ Hall 10		0	0
---THOMAS DEWHURST_S, Turners_ Hall 10		0	0
---LEWIS DOUGLAS_S, Virginia-street 10		0	0
---JOHN BIDDLE_S, Deptford 5		0	0
---BENJAMIN INGRAM_S, Hart-street 5		0	0
---ABRAHAM MULLINER_S, White_s-alley* 8		10	0
(* Mr. Foxwell, Mr. Ingram and Mr. Mulliner, were General Baptists.)			

This place was licensed, according to the Act of Toleration, in the court of the Bishop of Winchester, and secured in the hands of trustees, for the use of the churches, which, by their contributions, had become proprietors. I understand that this baptistery was used till about fifty years ago.

1717: Dispute between Baptists and Quakers.

discouraged by leading Persons in London.

March 1, 1717, a report was made to the Particular Baptist Ministers, at their weekly meeting at the Coffee-house Finch-lane, that the Baptists and Quakers in Northamptonshire had resolved upon having a public disputation on the points of difference between them; and that several of the principal of the _Friends_ in London being very uneasy respecting it, (as they apprehended, from the political tumults which had taken place at several towns in the country, that it might be attended with very ill consequences to the Dissenters in general,) were therefore desirous of conferring with the Baptist ministers upon the occasion.

Several persons of these denominations met the same evening; and on finding that there were but four days before the appointed meeting was to take place, they agreed to send off immediately the following letter, desiring them to desist from the public dispute.

_London, the first day of the first month, 1716-17.

_Whereas we are informed, that a public disputation is designed, between the Baptists and the people called Quakers, at Burton in Northamptonshire, or thereabouts, on the 5th day of this instant, upon some of those points wherein they differ from one another; we whose names are under written, having consulted together on this affair, and apprehending that the said public meeting may be attended with very bad consequences, considering there have been several tumults lately in England, and that an invasion designed by the enemies of our King and country has been lately discovered; and also that several disaffected persons would be glad of the least occasion to represent the peaceable Dissenters as fomentors of tumults and disorders, as well as themselves: we, therefore, earnestly entreat and advise our friends, as well on the one side, as on the other, that they would decline the said public assembling, and lay aside their intended disputation. We subscribe ourselves, your hearty friends and well-wishers,

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}

JOHN NOBLE, Elders
MARK KEY, of
EDW. WALLIN, several
JOHN SKEPP, Baptist

GEORGE WHITEHEAD, Your
JOHN BUTCHER, friends
JOHN KNIGHT, called
SIMEON WARNER, Quakers.

BEN. STINTON, Churches in London.

This letter did not produce the end designed. The meeting was held; the dispute was conducted in presence of a large number of persons; and at the close of the day, not having had time to discuss all the subjects on which they differed, they appointed another day (the 4th of June) to continue the debate.

It should seem that the Baptists had felt themselves to be unequal in argument to the Quakers, who, it is said, were _some of their best qualified men from London._ They resolved, however, to be a match for them in the next rencounter, and therefore sent to request the Rev. Dr. John Gale to come down and _assist them in vindicating their principles!_

1717: Public Dispute Discouraged.

Dr. Gale communicated this request to the united body of Baptist Ministers at their place of meeting, the Hanover Coffeehouse, Finch-lane. They being still of opinion that the disturbed state of the country made it exceedingly improper to hold such a meeting, sent to the _Friends,_ desiring a conference with them. This was held May 3, and the following letter was drawn up and sent to the pertinacious and angry polemics in Northamptonshire:—

_London, the 22d of the third month, called May.

_To our friends in Northamptonshire, who go under the denomination of Baptists and Quakers.

_We are informed, that notwithstanding the advice sent in a former letter, there was a dispute held between several of you on the 5th day of the first month, called March, last; and that, as the effect of that, there is another proposed to be held on the 6th of the fourth month next, called June, of which we declare our dislike, as well as of the former; for though we hope we have the same zeal for our principles, and love for whatever we have embraced for truth, as any of our brethren, yet, we think such public disputes don't tend to promote it, they being usually followed with very ill consequences, as well as that the present state of public affairs renders them at this time more especially unseasonable. The event of the former meeting doth show that the consequent is like to be worse; for, from contending, we perceive some on both sides are grown hot, which we fear, if not watched against, will destroy mutual love, arise to strife and envy, be a means to exasperate those who are of a different persuasion from us, give a handle to the enemies of both to misrepresent us to the government, and at last end in an unchristian strife and trouble. _We do therefore earnestly entreat you, as well on the one side as the other, to forbear the intended meeting, and not to insist upon such public ways of striving with each other,

seeing there are other methods which will be less offensive, and more informing to those who are in search of truth. We hope you will take us, in this whole affair, to be what we really are,

Your friends and well-wishers,

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}
}

BEN. STINTON, Your
JOHN GALE, brethren
LEWIS DOUGLAS, of the
JOS. BURROUGHS, Baptist
JOSEPH JENKINS, persuasion.

GEORGE WHITEHEAD, Your
JOHN KNIGHT, friends
THOMAS PITSLOW, called
WM. ARMITSTEAD, Quakers.
SIMEON WARNER,

1717: Public Dispute prevented.

On the receipt of this letter, though they were very reluctant to forego the pleasures of a verbal gladiatorial combat, yet, after some consideration, both parties agreed to withdraw from the theatre of contention, and to live in peace.

The London Ministers of the three Denominations hadn't presented any address to his Majesty at the suppression of the rebellion, as most of the corporations and public bodies had done. His Majesty having now returned from Hanover, and a new plot having been discovered for an invasion of the nation by the Swedes, at the instigation of the English Jacobites, they resolved to embrace this opportunity for again expressing their sentiments of attachment to his Majesty, and their zeal for the protestant government.

When the Ministers were assembled for considering the address, which had been prepared by the Committee, they found more difficulties in coming to an agreement than they had experienced on former occasions. Some of them were for speaking plainly of the hardships the Dissenters lay under, and of the little regard that was shown to their complaints of the persecuting acts which still existed against them, notwithstanding their steadfast loyalty to his Majesty, and their zeal for his royal house and the protestant interest. Others of them thought that complaints of that nature would come better from the laity than from the ministers, as they were principally affected by the operation of the Occasional Conformity and Schism Bills. An Address, therefore, containing neither complaints nor remonstrances, was drawn up by the Committee, and afterwards approved by the whole body; but by the contrivance of some persons it was not presented.

The *committee* were again convened to reconsider the matter, and to prepare another draught; and it was proposed that some gentlemen of the laity should be invited to unite with the Committee, to assist the ministers with their advice on such public occasions. In consequence of this the Presbyterians chose three, viz. Mssrs. Barrington, Grey Nevil, and Atwood, the Independents two, viz. Mssrs. Gould and Hollis; and the Baptists two, viz. Mr. Goddard, a deacon of the church at Turners_ Hall, and Mr. Marlow.

These gentlemen met with the Committee, and assisted them with their advice, but refused to unite with them in presenting the Address. It was therefore drawn up as the Address of the Ministers only, and, after it had been approved by the whole body, it was

presented, March 4, 1717, by the Rev. Dr. Calamy, who was attended by twelve other ministers, four of each denomination. The day afterwards it was published in the Gazette, with his Majesty_s answer.

1717: Address to the King.

TO THE KING_S MOST EXCELLENT MAJESTY.

_May it please your Majesty,

_Though we are very ambitious of professing the allegiance and duty we owe to your Majesty, on every occasion; yet we never make these professions with greater readiness and alacrity, than when your Majesty_s government is unhappily threatened with any disturbance at home, or from abroad; such occasions giving us the best opportunity to express that zeal and fidelity by which we are always desirous to be distinguished. As we offered up constant prayers to Almighty God for the safety of your Majesty_s person while you were abroad, and have since sent up our hearty thanks for your Majesty_s safe return to these your dominions; so we reckon it our great felicity, among the rest of your faithful subjects, that your Majesty is in this your kingdom before a rebellion, concerted between a *restless faction* and some foreign ministers, was to break out.

_We congratulate your Majesty with all humility on the success of your counsels abroad, which tends to secure your person and government from the malicious designs of your enemies; and that, as your Majesty, upon visiting your hereditary countries, saw some branches of your royal family in health, so, upon your return from them, you found your kingdoms in peace and tranquillity, by the prudent administration of her Royal Highness the Princess, and recovered from a danger which gave all your Majesty_s good subjects the utmost anxiety and concern,

_We take the liberty to return to your Majesty our most dutiful thanks for those privileges which we enjoy, in common with the rest of your subjects, under your government, by which the honour, commerce, and credit of this nation are so far retrieved and improved, and its security so much advanced; and also for the steps which your Majesty has been pleased to take towards repairing the damages which several of our persuasion suffered by the late *rebellious tumults*, pursuant to the address of the honourable House of Commons, and your Majesty_s most gracious answer.

_We unfeignedly wish your Majesty as entire a possession of the hearts of all those of your subjects that have been so unjustly and violently set against you, as your Majesty has of the affections of all our persuasion throughout your dominions. Among us, we know not that you have an open, a secret, or a suspected enemy; nor any, who, notwithstanding what they have suffered from your Majesty_s enemies, or the neglect they have hitherto met with from others, (for whose sakes, and with whom they have been always content to suffer,) can be brought to the least degree of indifference, about any thing that concerns your Majesty, your family, or your administration; we reckon it our peculiar glory that, during the late *unnatural rebellion*, there were not any of our principles, who did not express the utmost zeal for suppressing it, in their several stations and capacities.

_Your majesty's penetration will, we doubt not, easily lead you to discern, that such a body of your faithful subjects deserve to be distinguished in another manner than by marks of infamy. Their consolation is, that they were put under some of them, for what was hoped, at that time, would have been for your service: had your majesty and the nation found it so, we had been the more easy.

_We think it the particular honour of the protestant Dissenters, that their strict adherence to the interests of your illustrious family *before your Majesty's accession, and their loyalty to it since*, have drawn upon them so much of the fury of some of their fellow-subjects. We are not conscious what else could render us obnoxious to them; our principles being, we hope, the most friendly to mankind, and amounting to no more than that of a *general toleration* of all peaceable subjects, and universal love and charity for all Christians, and to act always in matters of religion as God shall give us light into his will about them.

_We do not so much as expect or desire anything that ought to give any one the least disturbance; we only wish that, under your Majesty, as the common prayer of all your loyal people, those of our persuasion might not want a capacity, as we hope your Majesty will find they never want an inclination, to promote the true interest of the protestant religion, and of their country.

May the great God continue to multiply his blessings upon your Majesty, and every branch of the royal family; and after you have many years ruled faithfully for God on earth, may you reign gloriously with him in heaven.

1717: Answer of the King.

HIS MAJESTY'S MOST GRACIOUS ANSWER.

I THANK YOU FOR YOUR DUTIFUL AND LOYAL ADDRESS; I AM FULLY CONVINCED OF THE LOYALTY AND ZEAL OF THE PROTESTANT DISSENTERS; I WILL GIVE ORDER FOR THE SPEEDY PAYMENT OF THE DAMAGES THEY HAVE SUSTAINED IN THE LATE TUMULTS, AND THEY AND YOU SHALL ALWAYS HAVE MY PROTECTION._

That our forefathers were able to assure the monarch, after such a period of national convulsion, and notwithstanding the _marks of infamy,_ which the parliament had refused to remove from them, that among the whole body of protestant Dissenters, they did not know that his Majesty had one _open secret, or suspected enemy,_ was indeed _a matter of peculiar glory,_ as well as that, during the late unnatural rebellion there were not any of them who did not express the utmost zeal in suppressing it, in their several stations and capacities. It is probable that this address produced a powerful effect, as we find the attention of government attracted towards their complaints.

At the opening of the Parliament in November 1717, the King thus powerfully pleaded the cause of his Dissenting subjects. *_I would heartily wish, that at a time when the enemies of our religion are, by all manner of artifices, endeavouring to undermine and weaken it both at home and abroad, all those who are friends to our present happy establishment might unanimously concur in some proper method for strengthening the Protestant interest, of which as the Church of England is unquestionably the main*

support and bulwark, so she will reap the principal benefit of every advantage accruing by the union and mutual charity of all protestants. As none can recommend themselves more effectually to my favour than by a sincere zeal for the just rights of the crown, and the liberties of the people; so I am determined to encourage all those who act agreeably to the constitution of these my kingdoms, and consequently to the principles on which my government is founded._

1717: The King unable to relieve the Dissenters.

Encouraged by these declarations of the monarch, the Dissenters throughout the kingdom thought this would be a good opportunity for seeking the repeal of all the invidious acts which were in force against them. But it was soon understood that the King pressed this affair with his ministers until he was told, by Lord Sunderland, that it would be impracticable, and _that to press the repeal of the Test Act at that time would ruin all._

The King in consequence informed Lord Barrington, who was a Dissenter, that _he should have been glad could the whole measure have been carried; but, as he was assured it could not be at that time, he believed the Dissenters were too much his friends to insist upon a thing which might be infinitely prejudicial to him, and which, instead of doing them any service, would only turn to their injury._ The Dissenters, finding it to be the wish of the King that they should not petition for the repeal of the Test Act, dropped the design, on being assured it should be repealed at another time.

1717: The Hierarchy oppose them.

A bill was brought into the House of Lords on the 13th of December, by Earl Stanhope, and was entitled _An Act for strengthening the Protestant Interest in these Kingdoms._ It proposed a repeal of the law against Occasional Conformity and the Growth of Schism, and of some of the clauses in the Test and Corporation Acts. This measure was strongly opposed by Dr. William Wake, Archbishop of Canterbury,*

(*Dr. Wake, whilst Bishop of Lincoln, had both voted and protested against passing the Schism Bill, in 1714. He was therefore, upon the demise of Dr. Thomas Tenison, Archbishop of Canterbury, translated to that Metropolitan see. Bishop Hoadly, in arguing in favour of the repeal, endeavoured to show at large _the unreasonableness and ill polity of imposing religious tests as a qualification for civil and military employments, as abridging the state of the service of many of its best subjects, and exposing its most sacred institutions and ordinances to be abused by profane and irreligious persons._ He also laboured to prove that the Occasional and Schism Acts were in effect persecuting laws; and that by admitting the examples of *self-defence* and *self-preservation* in matters of religion, all the persecutions of the heathens against the Christians, and even the popish inquisition, might be justified. As to the power, of which some clergymen appear so fond and so jealous, he owned _that the desire of power and riches is natural to all men; but that he had learned both from reason and the gospel, that this desire must keep within due bounds, and not intrench upon the rights and liberties of our fellow-creatures and countrymen._ This very year Archbishop Wake had entered into a correspondence with Lewis Ellis Dupin,

Doctor of Sorbonne, at Paris, and with Quinault and Piers de Girardin, both Doctors also of Sorbonne, concerning a UNION between the two Churches of England and France. _The Regent himself (Duke of Orleans) and Abbot du Bois, Minister of foreign affairs, as also Mr. Joli de Fleury, Attorney-General, gave the line at first, and let things run on to certain lengths. But the Jesuits and Constitutioners rung the alarum-bell, and overturned the whole scheme, by spreading a report that Cardinal de Noailles and his friends the Jansenists were upon the point of making a coalition with the heretics. Hereupon Dr. Piers de Girardin was sent for to Court, and severely reprimanded by Abbot du Bois, and strictly charged, upon pain of being sent to the Bastille, to give up all the letters he had received from the Archbishop of Canterbury, as also a copy of all his own. The Doctor was forced to obey; and all the letters were immediately sent to Rome, as so many trophies gained from the enemies of the church. Abbot du Bois was then in pursuit of a cardinal's cap, which met with some stop at Rome; his discovery of what was in agitation in France, and in concert with whom, is supposed to have contributed not a little to removing all difficulties, and to procuring that dignity which he soon after obtained. Thus ended this noble project! His Grace was perfectly sensible that nothing could be done in it without the concurrence of the state, however well disposed the principal men of that church might be towards it. Nevertheless the change of affairs contributed to the reputation of the Archbishop, his letters being admired even by the then Pope Clement XI who declared, _it was pity the author of such profound letters was not a member of their church!_ (See the Archbishop's *Life*, *Biog. Brit.* Vol. vii. p. 4090.) His biographer adds, _Although we must lament that what was so far happily advanced was thus broken off; yet it must be some pleasure to know, that the way is paved for this arduous, pious, and desirable work, whenever it shall please the Almighty to incline the princes of this world to come into it!_)

1719: Repeal of persecuting Laws.

And other prelates, and as strongly supported by Dr. Hoadley, Bishop of Bangor, and Dr. Kennett, Bishop of Peterborough. After many struggles, the friends of the bill agreed to leave out the clauses which related to the Test and Corporation Acts; and the bill passed, though not without a violent opposition, and received the royal assent February 18, 1719.*

(* Still it was provided that any Mayor, Bailiff, or other magistrate, who should knowingly and willingly attend a conventicle in the gown or ensigns of office, should, on conviction of such offence, be disabled from holding any office or employment in any public office whatever. &c.)

1717: Baptist Ordination.

Mr. Richard Allen, the worthy pastor of the church in Barbican, died February 20, 1717, and Mr. Joseph Burroughs, who had been his assistant in the ministry for about four years, was chosen to succeed him, and was on Wednesday, May 1, publicly ordained as pastor of the church, by laying on of hands. Messrs. Matthew Shelswell and George

Reynolds were, at the same time, and in the same manner, appointed to the deacon's office. On this occasion Mr. Foxwell read the third and fourth chapters of the first epistle to Timothy; Mr. Benjamin Stinton preached from Phil. 1:1, from which he explained the offices of pastors and deacons: and Mr. Nathaniel Hodges explained and vindicated the form of ordination, from Titus 1:5. Mr. Stinton then called upon the minister and the members of the church to signify by lifting up their hands, their mutual choice and consent to form this union. Then, after a short prayer, the ministers present laying their right hands upon the head of Mr. Burroughs, Mr. Stinton, in the name of the whole, pronounced the words of ordination as follows:—

—Brother Joseph Burrows, we do, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, and with the consent of this church, ordain thee, to be an elder, bishop, or overseer of this church of Jesus Christ. — Mr. Stinton then, while their hands rested upon the head of Mr. Burroughs, offered a short and appropriate prayer to God for him, and for the church over which he was now the recognized pastor.

After the deacons had been ordained in the same manner, Mr. Abraham Mulliner offered up a prayer for them, and then addressed the church from 1 Thess. 5:12, 13. After the sermon he prayed, and when a psalm of thanksgiving had been sung, the assembly was dismissed with one of the apostolical benedictions. *

(* From this account, which is given by Crosby with great minuteness, we learn that singing is only attended to at the close of the service.)

Mr. Joseph Stokes, of Horsham, a champion for Paedobaptism, who has been already mentioned, published in this year an octavo work, in reply to Dr. Gale's Treatise. It was entitled, —A Compassionate Plea for Infants; or Remarks on Dr. Gale's Reflections on

Mr. Wall's *History of Infant Baptism*. — This book, and his former pamphlet, were answered by a Mr. John Tasker. Mr. Stokes found an able antagonist also in Mr. Thomas Davy, who published a work of 158 pages, dated Leicester, September 29, 1718, entitled

—The Baptism of Adult Believers only, asserted and vindicated; and that of Infants disproved. — In which it is shewn, that the people called Anabaptists are of an apostolic original, and not a new upstart sect; and that there have been in every age, from Christ and the apostles' time, more or less, a people professing believers' baptism, and rejecting that of infants. With a Postscript, containing some Reflections on Mr. Stokes's *Compassionate Plea for Infants*; and an Appendix, containing a Discourse upon Acts 2:47. —

1717: Particular Baptist Fund.

This year is memorable in the history of the Baptists for the establishing of the London Fund, for the purpose of assisting necessitous ministers, and for providing education for young men who had been called to the work of the ministry by the churches to which they belonged.

On several former occasions great solicitude had been expressed by ministers and others to provide a public fund, from which necessitous ministers might derive assistance, whose churches did not provide sufficient for their support: but now this desirable object, though attended with considerable obstacles, was effected; and its establishment may be considered as the head of a river, which, having received many additional streams in its course, at present relieves the distresses and gladdens the hearts of many of the faithful

ministers of Christ. It may be truly said of this beneficial fund;—*For the administration of this service not only supplieth the wants of the saints, but is abundant also by many thanksgivings unto God.*

1717: Confined to Calvinists.

From the minutes of this admirable institution I copy the following _Paper of Proposals for raising a Fund, sent to the several Congregations of Particular Baptists in and about London.—_Whereas several ministers and other persons who have the interest and welfare of the baptized churches in England very much at heart, have observed for some time with great grief and trouble the little correspondence and union that there is between those of that denomination; the great decay of that interest in some parts of England, and the difficulty they have to keep up the public worship of God, with any tolerable reputation, in other parts; the great want of able and well-qualified persons to defend the truth, and to supply those churches which are in want of ministers; the poverty and distress which some employed in that sacred office are exposed to for want of a competent maintenance for themselves and families; and the frequent applications that are made to some private persons on those occasions, who neither have ability to help all, nor opportunity to inquire into the truth and circumstances of every particular case:—it is therefore proposed and earnestly desired by the said persons, 1. That a public fund or stock be raised to redress these grievances, and more especially for the support and maintenance of honourable ministers, and providing for a succession of such; and that this fund shall be for the use and advantage of those churches only that go under the denomination of Particular Baptists. 2. That it be begun by taking subscriptions, and making a public collection for it in the several congregations of that persuasion, in London, and the parts adjacent; and by the free gift of any particular persons whom God hath blessed with an ability and disposition for such an extensive and pious charity. 3. That as soon as a competent sum be either advanced or subscribed, the ministers and messengers of the several churches concerned, be desired to meet together to agree upon proper methods for the management and future supply thereof. 4. That every church that shall advance fifty pounds or upwards, shall send one messenger, with their elder, for the first year; that every church that shall give one hundred pounds or upwards, shall have the right of sending two messengers beside their elder; and those that give one hundred and fifty pounds, three. 5. That the managers thus chosen and sent by the churches, shall have liberty to invite any other gentlemen who have contributed to this fund to act with them as managers therein, provided they are not members of those churches who are represented by their messengers._

The first meeting, on June 4, 1717, was attended by the elders and managers of six congregations, viz. Tallow-chandlers_ hall, Little Wild-street, Devonshire-square, Cripplegate, Horselydown, and Flower-de-luce Court. The first of these proposed to raise towards the fund 200 *l.*; the second, 160 *l.*; the three next, 150 *l.* each, and the last 100 *l.* The elders present were, Messrs. John Noble, Mark Key, Benjamin Stinton, John Skepp, Edward Wallin; and the messengers, Eleazer Edwards, Joseph Staples, and Nathaniel Cevile; Samuel Burch, sen, John Taylor, and William Perkins; John Toms, George Richardson, and Samuel Hillier; James Watson and James Kirby; Abraham Atkins, John Valley, and Thomas Hixon; John Coombe and Thomas Wells.

1717: Objections to it being restricted.

The only difference of opinion which appears to have existed, was upon the subject of the fund being confined to persons of the particular Baptist persuasion. Mr. Benjamin Stinton was much opposed to that regulation, and wrote a very sensible and candid statement why he objected to such a restriction. He thought it would open a door for endless debates and struggles among the managers to determine what particular persons should partake of the charity. He stated that there were several ministers and churches of Anti-paedobaptists, who desired not to go under the name either of Generals or Particulars, nor who could be justly classed under those designations. He further urged, that it would expose the Baptists to other denominations of protestant Dissenters, as a people of an uncharitable and party spirit; that the Presbyterians had a fund from which they distributed many hundreds by the year, and extended their aid to Independents and Baptists; and that the Independents had a fund without any such limitations; _but,_ he adds, _the Baptists by this rule will tie up themselves from helping some of their own denomination, be they in ever so great necessity, or men of ever so much piety and usefulness, and though the managers themselves may then wish they could do it._ Mr. Stinton remarks still further, that the article only guarded against errors of one kind, and not those of another kind which may be equally dangerous and pernicious. _Whereas,_ says he, _if orthodoxy is to be the standard for the distribution of this charity, all dangerous errors ought to exclude persons from the benefit of it, as well as some. By particular Baptists, I suppose to be chiefly intended those that hold the doctrines of *personal election*, and of the *final perseverance of the saints*, according to the *Calvinistical* notion of them; now a man may hold both those truly, and yet at the same time advance principles more dangerous, and destructive of true godliness, than the denial of either; so that this article cannot satisfy any moderate *Calvinist*, unless it be explained to this effect, *that by Particular Baptists is intended those that are neither Arminians, or Antinomians.*_

This worthy minister states also, that the article had given great offence to several worthy and generous gentlemen, whose assistance would be of great service to the public, and was likely to keep several rich and numerous churches from joining in the design. He thought that it would promote disunion and opposition among the Baptists themselves; and that the object aimed at, namely, the prevention of persons who were not *orthodox* in their principles from partaking of the charity, might be effected without such a distinction, as the managers could always use their discretion in receiving or rejecting any case that was presented to them for relief.

1717: Principle confirmed.

There is no information how these objections were replied to. It is probable, however, that even Mr. Stinton ultimately approved of the expediency and lawfulness of the measure, as he immediately became a member of the society. The six congregations brought in their collections, and in August following there had been paid to the treasurer (Mr. Atkins) 874*l.* 14*s.* 6*d.* The congregations of Joiners_ Hall, Turners_ Hall, John-street, Gravel-lane, (Wapping,) Artillery-street, and Auliffe-street, were invited to join the fund.

1719: Letters of Messrs. Hollis.

A circumstance occurred at the close of the year 1719, which throws considerable light upon the tenacity that had been manifested to introduce and retain the article confining the fund to the assistance of those only who avowed themselves to be *Particular* or *Calvinistic* Baptists. Mr. Thomas Hollis, one of the managers, who had been a very liberal benefactor, and whose father, Mr. Thomas Hollis, and brother, Mr. John Hollis, had likewise liberally contributed towards the fund, proposed that the people at Barbican, under the care of Mr. Burroughs, should be invited into this fund: This proposal was instantly *negatived*. At the next meeting a letter was presented by Mr. Thomas Hollis, signed by himself and brother, and addressed to the Ministers and Messengers of the Baptized Churches meeting at Pinners Hall, London, which was as follows:—

—You have greatly grieved us, and some other brethren, hearty well-wishers to the cause we profess to engage in, by the narrow principles you tied yourselves unto at the last meeting, and particularly refusing our worthy friend and his church, that might be likely to be useful in the pious design.

—We beseech you to reconsider that vote now, or at any other time, before it be confirmed.

—We have in our power 200 *l.* of our late honoured father's money, which we are willing to be added to your fund, acquainting you though with the particular regard he had to poor Baptist ministers, whether pastors or teachers, in Wales, that they may be remembered by you now and hereafter in your annual distributions, and that it may be entered in your register.

—When you have considered how it shall be disposed of for an annual improvement, the money is ready to be paid to the treasurer or his order.

Your very loving friends and brethren,

THOMAS HOLLIS,

JOHN HOLLIS.—

Minorics, February 3, 1718-19.

—The said letter, the minutes add, was immediately taken into consideration; and touching the clause relating to the agreement made the last day, concerning the church under the care of Mr. Burroughs, it was resolved to abide by the former agreement in that matter, and that the treasurer attend Mr. Hollis, to advise with him how the L 200 mentioned in the last letter shall be disposed of.—

1719: Congregation in Paul's Alley refused.

The congregation in Paul's-alley, notwithstanding the respectability of its amiable, pious, and orthodox pastor, Mr. Burroughs, had long been degenerating into a lax and unscriptural catholicism, undervaluing the importance of the doctrines of the gospel. This they had given full proof of by listening to the anti-evangelical discourses of the Rev. Dr. John Gale. It will be perceived, that it was not so much to guard against general Baptist

ministers on account of their *Arminian*, as of their *Arian* and *Socinian* sentiments, which they had been publicly avowing and propagating. Had they admitted the congregation in Barbican, on account of the orthodoxy of its pastor, or of the number and opulence of its members, or of the benevolence of its advocates, they would have broken down a mound, namely, the *agreement of our churches in the confession of faith adopted by the Assembly in 1689*, which had hitherto preserved the Particular Baptist churches from the spreading contagion and corroding gangrene of Socinianism; and it would not have been possible to check the influence of that corrupt and fatal stream, which has spread barrenness and death wherever it has flowed, and which doubtless would have produced the same disasters among the Particular, as it has among the General Baptist churches. There is every reason for concluding that this arrangement was ultimately approved of even by Messrs. Hollis themselves, since Mr. John Hollis continued the treasurer of the fund, and both himself and his brother were among its most distinguished supporters.

1719: Letter from the Managers.

The managers of the fund were very early convinced that their pious and benevolent efforts were liable to be abused; and that those who had been accustomed to covetous practices would make it an occasion of gratifying their parsimonious disposition. *Let favour be shewed to the wicked, yet will he not learn righteousness!* They therefore wrote the following circular letter to counteract so unjust a use of the fund.

_TO THE CHURCH OF CHRIST AT _____, UNDER THE CARE OF OUR
HONOURED

BROTHER, MR. _____,

_The Elders and Messengers appointed by the churches to be Managers of the Fund raised at London for the help and support of poor Baptist Ministers, send greeting.

Honoured and beloved Brethren,

_Your application to us on behalf of your ministers gives grounds to hope that you are heartily desirous of his having an honourable and comfortable maintenance; and should any, on account of the small present sent him, either slacken their care or lessen their contributions, it would be a very great abuse and perversion of the generosity of others, and no small impediment to the progress of the good work lately begun.

_As our chief designs in this affair are the honour of God, the keeping up of his public worship in several parts of this kingdom, the edification of the churches, and the relief of many poor labourers in the Lord's vineyard; so we think it but reasonable to expect that our brethren in other parts, who are able, should give us their helping hand, at least to do all they can themselves in their own congregations, before they send for the help and bounty of others.

1719: Covetousness reprov'd.

_We have too much reason to fear that there are many in the churches who are shamefully deficient in their duty of contributing to the maintenance of their ministers;

some through a covetous disposition of mind, and others from their having imbibed some mistaken principle.

_As to the former, which we fear is usually the case, we can assure you that the money raised by this fund was not designed, neither will it be given, to excuse or ease such persons; and though at the first distribution from this public stock we could not have so full and particular an account of the state and circumstances of each church as was desired, yet all possible care will be taken in that matter for the future.

_As to the latter, if any among you doubt of the lawfulness or duty of maintaining their ministers, we desire them to consider, that the Lord hath ordained that they who preach the gospel should live of the gospel; and that the apostle presseth this duty upon Christians, not only from the command of our Lord, but from the reasonableness and equity of the thing itself: (1 Cor. 9:11-14): and for further satisfaction we refer them to a small treatise, recommended to the baptized churches by several elders in the year 1681, entitled, _The Gospel Minister's Maintenance vindicated._

_And now, brethren, we commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them who are sanctified; and subscribe ourselves,

Your brethren in the truth and fellowship of the gospel,

Signed,

JOHN NOBLE,	SAMUEL BURCH,
BENJAMIN STINTON,	ELEAZER EDWARDS,
JOHN SKEPP,	JOSEPH MATTHEWS
JOHN TOMS,	SAMUEL HILLIER_

JOHN TAYLOR,

A resolution of the managers that none were eligible to receive assistance from the fund who received more from their congregation than 25*l.* per annum, presents a most affecting instance of the evils of covetousness, which at that time prevailed in our churches; and it also shows what distress and poverty many of our ministers and their families must have endured, when, either through ignorance or infidelity, the Lord's command, that *they who preach the gospel should live of the gospel*, was so generally disobeyed. *

(* The first year's distribution of 419*l.* relieved one hundred ministers, ninety in England, and ten in Wales. They were divided into different classes, who received some eight, five, four, three, two, and one pound each. In the first and highest class of recipients is the name of John Gill, of Kettering, at that time in his 20th year. He received the same sum the next year also. His case is introduced by Mr. John Noble, who was a short time afterwards engaged in giving him a charge, at his ordination, over a congregation in London.)

1720: Academical Instruction.

Another important object contemplated by the supporters of the fund, was the providing for a succession of honourable ministers, by contributing towards their obtaining literary instructions, or by furnishing them with suitable books, to enable them to cultivate their own minds, and thus to make them well-instructed theologians, the better to fit them for filling the pastoral office in the churches.

1720: Regulations.

In the year 1720, the following report of a committee appointed to consider that subject, was presented to the managers:—

It being intended and agreed by the first proprietors and contributors to this fund, that a suitable provision should be made, as ability and opportunity presented, for a succession of able and well-qualified ministers of the Particular persuasion; it was therefore thought meet, that a certain sum of the capital stock in the South Sea Company be nominated and assigned to that particular use. And that the annual profits may be disposed according to the real design of the first principal benefactors, it is humbly offered, 1. That none be admitted to share in this beneficence but of the Particular persuasion, and who, having been baptized in water, is joined to a church of that denomination; and hath so far exercised his gift with them, as that they judge he hath promising ministerial abilities, which may deserve the notice and encouragement of this fund, and accordingly is by them recommended as one sound in the faith, and of good conversation. 2. That the person so recommended, before he is admitted to partake of this bounty, shall, if it be judged needful, submit himself to the hearing and examination of a committee of the managers, if in or near London, or to some other proper persons whom they shall desire to that end, if at a distance in the country; that so the Managers may be the better able to judge of the person's capacity to receive education, and what sort of assistance to give him. 3. That none who is thus approved and admitted shall decline or neglect the frequent exercise of his ministerial gifts, but in such an orderly manner as the church to which he related shall think fit and approve; but none shall be obliged to lay down or quit his secular calling or employment (if he hath any) while he is pursuing his studies by the encouragement and assistance of this fund.

This report being approved, 300 South Sea stock, and the income thereof, were immediately appropriated to that use.

In consequence of this resolution, several young ministers received assistance both in money and books. Among these was Mr. Samuel Wilson, afterwards the respectable pastor of the church in Prescott-street, and Mr. John Gill, who received in the year 1724-5, after he had settled in London, the sum of 17*l.* 10*s.* for that purpose. *

(* This was probably for the purpose of enabling Mr. Gill to purchase the Hebrew Books which had belonged to Mr. John Skepp, deceased; and which his Exposition of the Scriptures prove he turned to so good an account, as to Rabbinical literature.)

The managers of the fund having been informed, in the year 1722, that a Mr. Meredith had translated Mr. Bunyan's little book, entitled, *Good News to the vilest of Men*, into the Welch language, ordered that one hundred copies should be purchased to circulate among the Welch Baptist churches; and in the year 1726, they ordered that some copies of a sermon, published by Mr. David Rees of Limehouse, should be purchased for the same purpose. In this year too they voted four guineas to Mr. John Brine, to enable him to buy the Synopsis.

The small sums annually voted at this period for books, &c. were doubtless of great use, though they were totally insufficient to accomplish the proposed object, to obtain a succession of able and well-qualified ministers, in relation to literary acquirements. For many years annual exhibitions were granted from this fund to maintain several students at

Bristol; and at length the London Education Society was formed, which led, in the year 1810, to the establishment of the Academical Institution at Stepney. The history of both these societies must be deferred till a future volume of our work.

1719: Salters Hall Conference.

The course of our history has brought us to the year 1719, a period eventful in the history of protestant Dissenters, as in it was held what is known by the designation of the Salters Hall conference, which led to consequences that have been destructive to most of the Presbyterian congregations; the ministers of which at that time were the glory of the land.

As Baptist ministers, from being in connection with the other denominations, were involved in this memorable debate, it will be suitable to the design of our work to introduce a brief history of that which proved so disastrous to the dissenting interest.

1719: Origin of the Controversy.

The Arian heresy had been revived in England at the beginning of this century by the writings of Emlyn, Clarke, and Whiston. The first flame of angry contention produced by these sentiments amongst Dissenters broke out at Exeter in 1718-19, among the three united presbyterian congregations in that city.

Messrs. Pierce and Hallett, two of the ministers, refused to concur in the usual explication of the doctrine of the Trinity given by the Assembly's Catechism. The neighbouring ministers, who were consulted upon this subject, recommended that Messrs. Pierce and Hallet should be required to subscribe the following article, That the denying of the true and proper divinity of the Son of God, viz. that he is one God with the Father, is contrary to the doctrine of the holy Scriptures, and the common faith of the reformed churches.

Mr. Pierce told them, he would acknowledge that Christ and the Father were one, because he said so. Being asked if he would own they were one God, he answered, If they would turn to the text where it was said so, he would own it; but he had over and over declared that he would subscribe no religious test that was not expressed in Scripture words.

The Presbyterians at Exeter applied for advice to the general body of Dissenting Ministers of the three denominations in London; and a committee of that body drew up a paper, entitled Advices for promoting Peace. To deliberate upon this paper, the whole body of ministers were convened to meet at Salters Meeting-house, February 19, 1718-1719.

They met again on Friday, the 24th, and, after warm debating, a question was proposed which led to a division. Whether a declaration concerning the Trinity should not be inserted in the paper of Advices. The proposed declaration related to the first of the

Thirty-nine Articles of the Church of England, and the 5th and 6th articles of the Assembly's Catechism. To this was subjoined, We do heartily subscribe to that which is above expressed, as what we believe to be the doctrine of the blessed Trinity, revealed in the Scriptures. These declarations were signed by 77 ministers; and nearly as many refused, and protested against those who signed it.

It is not to be concluded, however, that the non-subscribers were all of them opposed to the doctrine of the Trinity, though some of them were known to be so. The former class objected to the proposed subscription, from an idea that it was an infringement of their Christian liberty, and inconsistent with their principles as protestant Dissenters, to subscribe any test of sentiment not expressed in the words of Scripture. Among the non-subscribers the most zealous was Dr. Gale, a General Baptist minister. It was probably in reference to the Doctor, that one minister asked, _Whether they came thither to be contradicted by Anabaptist teachers._ To whom it was replied, that _the persons they aimed at were not Anabaptist teachers, but Baptist ministers, of which name they were not ashamed; but that the former appellation denoted re-baptism, which they disowned._

For the purpose of ascertaining the sentiments of the Baptists in London at this period, on a subject of such vital importance as the doctrine of the Trinity, the names of the subscribing and non-subscribing ministers are annexed. But it is to be observed, that it by no means follows that their congregations were of the sentiments of their ministers, as they did not act as their representatives, but merely delivered their individual opinions.

Non-subscribing Ministers.

JOHN SAVAGE, Mill-yard.
 JOSEPH JENKINS, High-hall.
 JOSEPH BURROUGHS, Paul_s-alley, Barbican.
 BENJAMIN INGRAM, Fair-street, Borough.
 JOHN GALE, P. P. Paul_s-alley.
 NATHANIEL HODGES, Artillery-lane, Spital-fields.
 RICHARD PARKES, White-street.
 NATHANIEL FOXWELL, Fair-street.
 THOMAS RICHARDSON, Joiners_ Hall.

Subscribing Ministers.

JOHN SKEPP, Curriers_ Hall.
 DAVID REES, Limehouse.
 JOHN NOBLE, Tallow-chandlers_ Hall.
 EDWARD WALLIN, Flower-de-luce-court.
 THOMAS DEWHURST, Turners_ Hall.
 MARK KEY, Devonshire-square.
 ABR. MULLINER, White_s-alley, Moorfields.
 JOHN TOMS, Devonshire-square.
 JOSEPH MATTHEWS, Cherry-garden.
 JOHN SHARPE, Frome, Somerset.

Dr. Watts, Dr. Calamy, Mr. Neal, and others, left the Assembly before the division took place.

1719: Reasons of the Non-subscribers.

That the reader may be in possession of the reasons which the ministers on both sides assigned in vindication of their conduct in respect to subscription or non-subscription, the following brief statement is copied from pamphlets published by themselves.

The non-subscribers say, _We did not think fit to subscribe, because we thought no sufficient reasons were offered for our subscribing. We were pressed to it, that we might clear ourselves from suspicion of Arianism. But as we knew no just grounds of suspicion, much less of any charge against us, we thought it would ill become us so far to indulge an *unreasonable jealousy*, as to take a step of this nature for removing it; especially since doing so would have been inconsistent with one of our *advices*, which we thought necessary to be given, and which was founded upon an *apostolical rule*. *

(* The advice referred to is the following, founded, as they say, upon the apostolic principle of *mutual forbearance* and *brotherly love*:—_That Christians, especially ministers of the gospel of peace, should on the one hand carefully avoid giving any just occasion of offence, and, on the other, avoid and discountenance all unreasonable jealousy concerning the sentiments and opinions of others, particularly of ministers, and all rash judging of the Christianity and sincerity of their brethren; and promote to their power mutual forbearance and brotherly love, *as far as a just concern for truth and holiness will allow*. _The reader will perceive that the *subscribers* were governed by this limiting clause of the *non-subscribers*: they thought a just concern for truth and holiness demanded from them a declaration of their sentiments, at a time when fundamental doctrines were impugned.)

And we see no need of such jealousies; for if we may be suspected of *Arianism*, without having taught any thing like it, and though we have taken all proper occasion to offer our reasons against it, and that not only from the pulpit, but some of us from the *press*; we say, if we must be suspected merely because we would not subscribe what our brethren would have us, why may we not be suspected of *hypocrisy* after we have done it, and then pass into the world for *Arians*, and *cheats* into the bargain? We never yet thought *jealousy* and suspicion to be such good-natured things as to be satisfied with a *few good words*. _

These ministers did not hereby intimate that such were the sentiments of their brethren towards them, but that such were the inferences that might be drawn from their tenacity for subscribing the proposed articles; for they add, _Though we would not charge our brethren that required our subscription with a design which any of them do disclaim, yet to us it appeared, and still does appear, to have the *nature of imposition*, which has been the great engine of division among Christians from the beginning, and has done unspeakable mischief to the Christian church. _

1719: Reasons of the Subscribers.

The subscribers, in justifying their conduct, say, _The great occasion of the subscription is, to bear testimony against the growing error of the present day, which introduces a new doctrine of the sacred *Trinity*; and to distinguish ourselves from those that are gone into it. They will call the *Son, God*, and some of them the *Holy Ghost, God*;—preach for the true and proper *divinity* of the *one* and the *other*; that is, such a *divinity* as they will call *true* and *proper*, without saying what it is;—profess to believe in the *Son*, and to believe in

the *Holy Ghost*, and highly to *love* and to *honour* the *one* and the *other*;—and make solemn *appeals* to God, and *protestations* to man, of their *sincerity* in all this. And what is all this for? What need of so much ado? Why, only to avoid declaring that the doctrine expressed in those words of the Catechism, namely, that *there are three persons in the Godhead, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, and these three are one God, the same in substance, equal in power and glory*,—is what they believe to be the doctrine of the Holy Trinity, revealed in the Scriptures._

1719: Importance of the Debates.

The reader should be informed, that the *Arians* had boasted that the more considerable of the Dissenting ministers were of their sentiments; that high-church sermons and pamphlets upbraided the Dissenters without distinction as Anti-trinitarians; and that one of the judges upon the western circuit had taken notice, in his charge to the grand juries, of what was reported of the Dissenters as being gone off from the doctrine of the Trinity, as one of the matters which would belong to their inquiry. And further that Mr. John Sharp, a Baptist Minister from Frome, who attended the conferences at Salters_ Hall, said, _that the eyes of all the West of England were upon the ministers of London, to see what they could do in this juncture; that he waited with concern for the result of the debates; and that if they broke up without coming to a declaration of their faith in the doctrine of the Trinity, it would be the greatest blow imaginable to the Dissenting interest in the west country._

It was certainly a very difficult dilemma into which many of these ministers were brought, when their characters as orthodox or heterodox were to be decided by their subscribing or refusing to subscribe human tests, however unexceptionably expressed. Some of them thought that to subscribe what they cordially believed to be the *sense* of the holy Scriptures, was both lawful and highly expedient, where the *words* of Scriptures would not decide between those who held different sentiments respecting the meaning of those very words. The non-subscribers say, _We freely declare that we utterly disown the Arian doctrine and sincerely believe the doctrine of the blessed Trinity, and the proper divinity of our Lord Jesus Christ, which we apprehend to be clearly revealed in the holy Scriptures._ But they add, _the human words, *Trinity* and *proper divinity*, on this declaration, are used only to notify the things we speak of; and we do not presume in the way of *test*, to go into any particular explications of those things either in our own, or in other men_s words; but for that we refer to the holy Scriptures whence it may appear, that we take the Scripture account of those things to be the best and fittest we can use on such an occasion._

1719: Wisdom of the Subscribers.

It should seem that the non-subscribers were imposed upon by the specious sounds of charity and peace, of candour and moderation. Instead of being governed by such considerations at a time when the fundamental doctrines of the gospel were denied, they ought to have imitated the conduct of Paul and Barnabas, who, when sentiments subversive of the doctrine of justification by grace alone were introduced, immediately took a decided part, giving place by subjection, no not for an hour, that the truth of the

gospel might continue with their brethren; and the former of whom, on another occasion, declared, that if an angel from heaven were to preach another gospel he ought to be accursed. It is worthy of observation, as it respects the non-subscribers among the Baptists, that the churches to which they belonged, have become extinct; or, if there are any vestiges of them remaining, those who compose them are found marshalled under the banner of Socinus. The truth of the gospel has not continued with them; and these remarks are applicable to all the Presbyterian churches. It is pleasant also to remark, that most of the Particular Baptist ministers in London were so zealous for the doctrine of the Trinity, and the proper divinity of the Lord Jesus, as to subscribe with their hands what they believed in their hearts; thus contributing to stem the torrent which threatened to deluge the whole of the Dissenting churches. *When the enemy came in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord thus lifted up a standard against him.*— This, too, was remarkably the case with our churches in the west of England.

1719: Conduct of the Western churches.

By a circular letter of the Western Association which assembled at Trowbridge on May 20, 1719, we learn that none of the associated churches were infected with this pestilential heresy. They say, _We have great cause to rejoice that, in this degenerate state of the churches, the great adversary hath not had so great power as to break in upon and divide any of the churches to which we are related. For to the joy of our souls we find them all in peace among themselves, and some of them rather increasing in their number than declining. And though it is a perilous day, wherein many of other persuasions depart from the faith once delivered to the saints, particularly in the great article of the Christian religion, we mean concerning the Deity of our blessed Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ; denying or calling into question his eternal Godhead; suggesting that he is not of the same nature with the Father,—that he is not supreme God, but a mighty glorious creature, in his divine nature superangelical,—and that the *logos*, or divine nature, in the person of our glorious Redeemer supplied the place of a human soul; which at once takes away, not only his real divinity, but his true humanity;—though it is thus with others, we rejoice that none of the churches, or of the ministers, belonging to this Association, hold any such pernicious doctrines._

1722: Declaration of Faith required.

It is pleasing to observe, how exceedingly careful our ministers in the West were to preserve their churches from this awful contagion. The Association which met at Tiverton in 1721, determined upon having _A collection of rules prepared for governing the proceedings of this Assembly._ The ministers appointed to draw them up, were Messrs. James Murch, James Webb, James Sampson, and Thomas Dunsford. In performing this delicate task, they adhered as closely as possible to the _Preliminary Articles,_ by which their most early associations in those parts had been governed. This paper was presented to the Association held at Frome the following year, 1722, and was adopted, and recommended to all the churches.

By the letter and Breviates of the next General Association, (1723,) it appears, that a variety of opinions prevailed in the churches respecting the proposed regulations; and as

some of them had not received a copy, it was determined that each church should be furnished with a copy, having a new recommendation in the following words:- _Which we approve of, and recommend to our several churches for them to ratify if they see fit._ The title was altered as follows:- _Preliminary Articles for regulating the proceedings of the yearly Assemblies, or Associations, of Elders and Messengers of the Churches of Christ, baptized on a personal Profession of Faith and Repentance, and holding the Doctrine of the Trinity of Persons in the Unity of the Godhead; (or, as it may be otherwise expressed, of the Equality of the Father, Son, and Spirit, in Eternity, Power, and Glory;) the Doctrines of personal Election, and the final Perseverance of the Saints; denying the destructive corrupt Principles of the Arminians, on the one hand, and the Antinomians, on the other, so far as we know them._ They also _recommend it to the churches to judge, whether it would not be expedient for them in their future letters to express themselves, in some part or other of them, in terms equivalent to those used in the title to the Preliminaries before mentioned._

By this Association, too, the character of one of their ministers was justified from the charge of having embraced the scheme of Messrs. Pierce and Hallet. They say, _Whereas it has appeared to us by a letter from the church at Bampton, and by a letter from Mr. James Murch himself, pastor of that congregation, that a report had been spread concerning him, that he had fallen into the scheme commonly called the New, or Arian Scheme, we do hereby declare that we believe the said report to be altogether false and groundless, and that he is sound in the faith._

1723: The Utility of the Measure.

It will have struck the mind of the intelligent reader, that these ministers seem to have profited by the contentions, confusions, and disorders, which prevailed in the synod at Salters_ Hall. They do not require subscriptions to any form of words, much less to articles of faith, expressed in the words taught by man_s wisdom: but they at the same time intimate strongly the expediency of the churches expressing themselves in such terms as should prove them to be sound in the faith of three equal Persons in the Unity of the Godhead. As, however, they were aware that the term *person* had been excepted against, as improper for explaining the distinct subsistence of the Father, Son, and Spirit, in the divine Unity, they wisely subjoin the meaning which they affix to it in a way which is free from objection. And even this explanation is not recommended as perfectly satisfactory to all; (though I do not see how a Trinitarian could possibly object to such a mode of expression;) and therefore they only suggest the expediency of using those, or terms equivalent. And as there were some that objected to the placing of these at the head of the Letter, as if they were subscribing articles of faith prepared for them by others; the ministers declare, that it would be perfectly satisfactory if they were introduced in the body of the epistle. They say in effect, _Only give us evidence in your collective characters, as churches of Christ, that you are not infected with the New or Arian Scheme, and that is all we require. Let us know that you are sound in the doctrine of the Trinity, and the correspondent doctrines of the distinct and proper divinity of the Lord Jesus Christ, and of the Holy Spirit, and we are indifferent as to the terms which you select for expressing those sentiments._ Thus while contending earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints, they endeavored to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of

peace; and by taking heed unto themselves and the their doctrines, they both saved themselves, and those who heard them, from the snares of the destroyer. The following are the names of the pastors and ministers who signed this important letter the signature of each being in his own handwriting.

EMANUEL GIFFORD,	JOSEPH JEFFRIES,
JOHN SHARPE,	JOHN MARSH,
JOHN WEBB,	NICHOLAS GREEN,
EDWARD EVANS,	FRANCIS RADDON,
BENJAMIN BRITTEN,	JOHN REDE,
DANIEL BEBERSTOCK,	FRANCIS TERRILL,
THOMAS LUCAS,	FRANCIS LAKE,
JOSEPH STENNETT,	JAMES KIDDBE,
ISAAC HANN,	BARNARD FOSKETT,
SAMUEL NEWMAN,	WILLIAM WILKINS,
ZEB. MARSHMAN,	JOHN WILKINS,
MORGAN JOHN,	RICHARD HOOPER,
WILLIAM BAZLEY,	THOMAS JOSLING,
C. BROOKES,	ENOCH WILLIAMS,
HENRY HAWKINS,	JOSIAH WEARE,
ROBERT TROTMAN,	WILLIAM DAVIS,
JOHN CHANNON,	THOMAS JONES,

1722: Sentiments of Mr. Joseph Stennett.

The following sentiments respecting many of the non-subscribers, are from the pen of Mr. Joseph Stennett, then minister at Exeter, who signed the above letter, and was so situated as to behold the contest to great advantage.—_The simplicity of the gospel, I think, naturally requires and obliges us to make a public and explicit confession, as proper occasions offer, of every doctrine which we believe to be contained in the word of God: without it, no communion can be secured from a mixture of persons of the most corrupt principles that have ever been advanced in the world. If a bare assent to the letter of Scripture were sufficient, without regard had to the sense of it, the belief of transubstantiation itself, and the blasphemies of the Anthropomorphites, would be no bars to religious fellowship. I doubt not, indeed, but many good men, who some years ago refused to join with their brethren in a public subscription to the collective sense of Scripture, with regard to the fundamental principles of Christianity, which were then attacked, were intimidated through an apprehension that, by doing so, they should cast some disgrace upon the letter of Divine Revelation. But surely they little thought that so many of those who, at that time, most strenuously urged this objection, would so soon have ventured to use the letter of it in the manner they have done. They have some of them lived to see, that not a few, who then treated the sound and faithful confessions of their forefathers with great contempt, and represented those who thought themselves obliged to bear their public testimony to the great truths it contained, as no friends to the Bible, have themselves pleaded for the sufficiency of the light of nature without it. And thus men_s minds being led off, first from due regard to the sense of the Scriptures, and

then to the importance even of the letter, too many have given up good part of their Bibles, and some have renounced and cast contempt upon the whole._ *

(* Sermon by the Rev. Joseph Stennett, of Wild-street, entitled, _The Christian Strife for the Faith of the Gospel,_ p. 16, 17. 1738.)

1722: Fall of Bishop Atterbury.

The year 1722, witnessed a triumph in behalf of the Dissenters. This was the degradation of Dr. Atterbury, Bishop of Rochester, who was accused of having entered into a dangerous conspiracy against the person and government of the King. His Majesty had now another opportunity of perceiving the attachment felt for his house and government by the friends of civil and religious liberty. For soon after making a tour through the west of England, he was every where received with the liveliest tokens of esteem and satisfaction.

On this occasion the Dissenting ministers, in London, presented the following Address, which was published, with his Majesty_s Answer, in the Gazette.

1722: Address to the King.

_St. James_s, November 23. –The following humble Address has been presented to his Majesty by Mr. Matthew Clarke, accompanied by several of his brethren, introduced by the right honourable the Lord Viscount Townshend, one of his Majesty_s principal Secretaries of State; and all had the honour to kiss his Majesty_s hand.

_TO THE KING_S MOST EXCELLENT MAJESTY.

_The humble Address of the Protestant Dissenting Ministers, in and about the cities of London and Westminster.

_May it please your Majesty,

_We have so often returned thanks to Almighty God, for your Majesty_s peaceable settlement upon the British throne, and so heartily prayed for the continuance of your happy government, that we must of all people have been inconsistent with ourselves, if we had not been very sensibly affected with the kindness of divine Providence, in discovering the evil designs of those who, in defiance of all, even the most sacred engagements, have been, and still are fighting against their own happiness, and striving to make themselves and the whole nation miserable.

It grieves us that our native country should produce such monsters of ingratitude and perfidiousness. We are at a loss to express how much we abhor their practices; and as for the principles which lead into them, we cannot but account them as foolish as they are impious.

_To imagine that a protestant Kingdom should flourish under the influence of popish counsels, or our religious and civil liberties be best secured by sacrificing them to the avowed enemies of both, are absurdities too gross to be digested by any that know the value of either.

We assure your Majesty that we, as ministers of the gospel of peace, are fully determined always to recommend loyalty and fidelity to your government. And it is no small

satisfaction to us, that we are engaged with a people so well disposed in this respect as the protestant Dissenters of whom we can with safety declare, that in all parts of the kingdom, they adhere inviolably to your Majesty, as their only rightful and lawful sovereign, and are very sensible of the many blessings of your auspicious reign, which is not only just and equal at home, but glorious abroad, through the tender concern which your Majesty, upon all occasions, is pleased to discover for the liberties of Europe, and for our Protestant brethren in foreign parts.

_And we please ourselves with the hopes, that the restless attempts of a disappointed party, to make the country a scene of blood, by bringing upon us a popish Pretender, will contribute to fixing your Majesty the firmer, of possible, upon the throne, and will endear you the more to all your people, and the better secure to them and their posterity the happy establishment of the Protestant succession.

_Inclination, great Sir, as well as duty, will lead us to continue our ardent prayers, that your Majesty_s invaluable life may be long preserved; that your councils may be prospered, to the full detection of the traitorous designs of your enemies, and the strengthening of our common security; and that the crown may flourish, in your Majesty_s name, in all succeeding ages.

1722: His Majesty_s Answer.

_HIS MAJESTY_S GRACIOUS ANSWER.

I THANK YOU FOR THIS LOYAL AND DUTIFUL ADDRESS. YOUR STEADY AND CONSTANT ADHERENCE AND AFFECTION TO MY PERSON AND GOVERNMENT, GIVE YOU A MOST JUST TITLE TO MY PROTECTION, ON WHICH YOU MAY ALWAYS DEPEND.

It was immediately after this that the REGIUM DONUM originated, or the King_s gift to necessitous protestant Dissenting ministers. There can be no doubt but George I. impressed with sentiments of affection towards the Dissenters, who had shown themselves such steady friends to the protestant succession, would have cheerfully repealed, had he not been contravened, every statute which infringed the rights of private judgment, violated the liberty of conscience, and made odious distinctions between one good subject and another. To show the Dissenters, however, a mark of his personal esteem, he ordered five hundred pounds to be presented from his private purse. His predecessor Queen Anne had given a similar mark of her esteem and confidence to Mr. Joseph Stennett, with this difference, that what he received was for his own personal benefit, while this was for general distribution.

1723: Origin of the Regium Donum.

As the Baptists have not only shared in this bounty, but, from the death of Dr. Samuel Chandler in 1766, till 1806, a period of forty years, had the warrant from the treasury given to their ministers, I shall give as full an account of this matter as I have been able to collect.

It appears that the persons who were first entrusted with five hundred pounds from the royal purse, for distribution among necessitous Dissenting ministers, knew not to whom

they were indebted, nor from what source it was derived. A minister, who wrote from authentic papers, says, _The varied forms of receipts they were to sign from 1722 to 1726, were strangely obscure; and the form in use in the year 1762 was equally mysterious._ I have not been able to ascertain who were the first recipients. It is highly probable that Dr. Samuel Chandler *

(* Dr. Chandler was well known and much respected by many persons of the highest rank, and, could he have satisfied himself to conform, might have obtained considerable preferment in the church; but he steadily rejected every proposition of that kind. When he was complaining of certain things in the conduct of the Dissenters, which had given him offence, in the hearing of a certain dignitary, the prelate, in a jocose manner, asked him, _Why then, Doctor, do you not leave them?_ To which he replied, _Why, my Lord, so I would, if I could find a body of worthier people!_ –Wilson_s *History of Dissenting Churches*, vol. ii. p. 379.)

received the warrant, and that it was under the entire management of himself and his personal friends from the time of George I. during the long reign of George II. and until some time after the commencement of the last reign. *

(* By a manuscript now before me I find that many of the ministers were much dissatisfied with the manner in which the *Regium Donum* was received and distributed. At a public meeting, held at Salters_ Hall, April 6, 1736, the following motion was proposed:– _That receiving of money from persons in power by Dissenting ministers, and distributing it privately without account, is disapproved by this Assembly._ This was got rid of by some one moving the previous question. It was then proposed, _That the names of those ministers might be mentioned, who receive money from men in power;_ but this was also evaded by a motion of adjournment.)

1723: Regium Donum.

In 1762 the distributors erected themselves into a society, consisting of six ministers and seven gentlemen, and agreed _that no person shall be deemed a minister of the Three Denominations, or have any share in this charity, who does not apply himself wholly to the work of the ministry; that is, if he follows a trade._ This was an unwarrantable stretch of power, unless it can be shown that the _warrant_ restricted the use of the money to those ministers who were out of business. Should this work ever be read by any of his Majesty_s Ministers who are connected with the Treasury, it may be desirable to inform them, and the writer pledges his ability to make good the statement by abundant evidence, that there are many protestant Dissenting ministers, who, notwithstanding (because they would make the gospel with out charge to a poor people) they do not refuse to _follow a trade,_ yet apply themselves more fully to the proper work of a minister of the gospel, than many of those who, from being proud of their literary distinctions and their clerical character, have looked down upon their illiterate and lay brethren with supercilious contempt. This obnoxious resolution, however, was passed; and it was also resolved, _that the Chairman of this Society be interchangeably a gentleman, and a minister._ It is possible, therefore, that the above restriction was suggested by some dissenting gentleman, who could not bear to hear of any of their ministers _following a

trade. It is hoped, when such gentlemen wrote the following *memorandum*, _dined together at the King_s Head Tavern, October 16, 1764, and audited part of the accounts,_ that they did not dine at the expense of the King_s bounty _to necessitous Dissenting ministers._ If they did, it was an act of positive injustice; as they doubtless spent enough in one *tavern dinner*, to assist the families of several ministers, whose zeal in the cause of their Master had prevented them, even though _following a trade,_ from providing for them,—whilst the *mere distributors* of his Majesty_s bounty were spending in luxury what was kindly intended to supply the necessities of their poorer brethren. *

(* The writer above referred to was the late Rev. John Martin, who, on being deprived of the _warrant,_ which he had held from the death of Dr. Samuel Stennett, published _A Letter concerning the Regium Donum, addressed to those ministers to whom his Majesty_s bounty has been distributed since the death of Dr. Stennett,_ 1806. p. 5, 6. Mr. Martin had rendered himself obnoxious to his brethren in the ministry by his unkind misrepresentations of their political sentiments. There is no doubt, however, that he distributed this royal bounty with integrity and impartiality.)

The distribution of this money has led to many unkind and unjust aspersions respecting the design of the Government in bestowing it, and the political influence it has had upon the spirit of protestant Dissenters. A writer *

(* The Rev. George Dyer, in his *Life of the Rev. Robert Robinson*, p. 237, &c. 1796.)

of our denomination, distinguished for his *skeptical opinions*, in mentioning this subject, exclaims;— _Fatal era! For these protestant Dissenting ministers first became state pensioners and ministerial tools!_ Then, I say, if five hundred pounds per annum could purchase all the protestant Dissenting ministers in England, and transform them into _state pensioners and ministerial tools,_ they were not worth what was paid for them! Too despicable to be feared by any minister of state, too mean to be courted! Surely, even Sir Robert Walpole never made so cheap a purchase, if _every man had his price!

Neither this writer, nor the writer in the London Magazine of 1774, from whom he quotes, has produced any proof that this sum of money from the treasury has tended to the political degradation of Dissenters; nor indeed could that be done. If it has prevented any of their ministers from interfering with the matters of state, or if it has tended to preserve them from the mania of a political spirit, and increased their attention to the affairs of *that kingdom which is not of this world*; then, whatever might be the intention of Sir Robert Walpole, though he might even *mean it for evil, God meant it for good, to save much people alive*, and to preserve them from a corrupt and worldly spirit. It is added;— _Some few years after, for their good services to administration, and to enable them to do more, this sum was increased, and advanced to eight hundred and fifty pounds half yearly. This is the present value (1774) of the treasury warrant; but there are large fees and deductions._ *

(* the *nominal* sum is 850*l.* the *net* sum received is 784*l.* 14*s.*—Vide Mr. Martin_s letter, p. 9.)

1723: Parliamentary Grant.

And this is *still* the value of the royal grant, now called the *Parliamentary Grant*, because voted annually by Parliament. But to speak of even this sum, which is divided between the Presbyterian, Independent, and Baptist Ministers, as being granted *for* their good services to administration, *to enable them to do more good services as the price of their liberty; hush money; an Achan's wedge in the camp; the means of encouraging separations, and supporting divisions, in city and country; and as having procured the almoners an influence and power both in city and country, that is dangerous, and may be fatal, to the cause at large, &c.*—these are indeed prognostications too ridiculous to be noticed. *Nine almoners* distribute, after *the large fees and deductions, one hundred and sixty pounds per annum, each.* They must be extremely clever, if, with so small a sum, they have obtained an *influence and power both in city and country, which is dangerous, and may be fatal to the cause at large.* The writer has lived in the city these seventeen years, but he has never known any of these almoners making use of the Regium Donum for procuring influence; and believes that, had they expected any poor minister to barter his independence for four or five pounds once in two or three years, the money would have been indignantly thrown back into their hands; there not being a minister, so far as he knows them, of any denominations, who does not act, and who will not act, upon the maxim of the immortal Selden, *ABOVE ALL, LIBERTY!*

1724: Society of Calvinistic Baptist Ministers.

In the reign of Queen Anne mention was made of a Society of Calvinistic Baptist Ministers meeting weekly at the Hanover Coffee-house: it is probable that the annual meetings of the Assembly had produced a monthly meeting of the associated churches *for prayer and a sermon,* and that most of the churches whose ministers belonged to that Society were united in that monthly Association. I have no evidence when that Society was dissolved, and those monthly meetings discontinued; but at this time a new Society was formed of the most respectable of our pastors in London. Its origin is thus recorded. January 20, 1723-24. The Minutes of a Society of Ministers of the Baptist particular Persuasion, meeting at the Gloucestershire Coffee-house, on Monday, at three o'clock, *

(* It was altered to Tuesday afternoons, at 3 o'clock, Sep. 29, 1729.)

whose names are as follows:—

MR. JOHN NOBLE,	MR. WILLIAM ARNOLD,
---MARK KEY,	---CLENDON DAWKES,
---EDWARD WALLEN,	---THOMAS RICHARDSON,
---RICHARD PARKES,	---HUMPHREY BARROW,
---DAVID REES,	---JOHN BIDDLE,
---EDWARD RIDGEWAY,	---SAMUEL WILSON, <i>sec.</i>
---JOHN GILL,	

The business of these meetings at the Coffee-house was conducted with great regularity. They gave their opinion and advice in any matters of difficulty in the churches that were referred to them by both parties; they received applications from country ministers to assist them from the Baptist Fund; they sanctioned and recommended cases of building and repairing meeting-houses in the country to be collected for in London; they watched rigorously over the purity of the members composing the board, whether it

related to charges of immoral conduct, or of erroneous principles; they received to their friendship ministers upon their being settled as pastors in the churches, and young ministers who were introduced by the pastors of the respective churches which had called them to the ministry; and they appear to have generally acted in a body in assisting destitute churches, and at the ordination of ministers,—to have very strictly discouraged separations in the churches,—and to have affectionately supported each other against traducers. Instances of each of these particulars could be given: I select one only, which relates to the last-mentioned article.

1733: They resent the Conduct of Mr. Farmer.

In the year 1733, an Independent Minister, Mr. John Farmer, (elder brother of the celebrated Hugh Farmer, of Salters_ Hall,) assistant minister to Mr. Rawlins, at Fetter-lane, and a distinguished Greek scholar, had _reflected in a very unkind and unhandsome manner upon the whole body of the Baptists._ On April 17, 1733, it was agreed that the following letter should be sent to the body of Independent Ministers:—

_Reverend Brethren,

_The body of the Baptist Ministers of the Calvinist Persuasion, in and about London, having considered the affair debated in their presence at this Coffee-house, on March 12, 1732-33, (viz. Mr. Farmer_s treatment of Mr. Wilson, together with his unkind and unjust reflections on the whole body of the Baptists,) cannot but represent their great uneasiness to you, apprehending that they were not treated with that regard which the nature of the thing called for. Wherefore, in order to maintain that peace and love which have so long subsisted between us, we desire that five or six pastors of your body may be appointed to give a like number of pastors among us a meeting, at such place as you may think proper, that this affair may be amicably adjusted.

We are, Reverend Brethren, with great respect, yours,

JOHN GILL,
JOHN BRINE,
EDWARD WALLIN,
SAMUEL DEW,
WILLIAM ARNOLD,
JOHN TOWNSEND,
SAYER RHUDD,
JOHN RHUDD,

A. GIFFORD, *Secretary.*

P.S. We desire that Mr. Farmer may be present at the said meeting.

At the next meeting, on April 24, 1733, Messrs. Gill and Arnold reported, that they had carried the fore-mentioned letter, but that there were not ministers enough present to return an answer. _Agreed, that they go again on this day fortnight, and desire an answer._

At the next meeting, May 8, 1733, Messrs. Gill and Arnold reported, that they had been with the brethren of the Independent persuasion, about Mr. Farmer, who returned this answer, viz. _That they disliked and abhorred Mr. Farmer_s treatment of Mr. Wilson in particular, and much more his treatment of the Baptists in general; and desire that they would let the affair drop for the sake of peace._

This was very Christian-like and noble conduct in the Body of Independent Ministers, and must have operated as a salutary reproof to the unhallowed zeal of Mr. Farmer, who would have called fire from heaven to consume those who followed not with him; and it furnished also a good example of the spirit which ministers ought to manifest towards conscientious Christians, though of another denomination. As a proof that the Baptists entertained no malevolent feelings in their anger with Mr. Farmer, and merely requested a vindication of their character from his *_unkind and unhandsome treatment,_* they immediately and unanimously *_agreed to comply with their request._*

1734: Zeal for Trinitarian Doctrines.

Ministers Excluded.

Another instance of their regard for the purity of religious sentiment occurred in the beginning of the next year, February 1733-4. This was a matter brought before them by one of the associated churches, expressing its disapprobation of Mr. Sayer Rhudd's sentiments respecting the doctrine of the Trinity. That gentleman and his brother being present, and having avowed themselves to be Anti-trinitarians, were requested to withdraw while the ministers were deliberating on the course they ought to take. On their return, they had the following resolution read to them:— *_Whereas Mr. Sayer Rhudd and Mr. John Rhudd have this day openly declared that _the Trinitarian doctrine appears to them to be entirely human, consisting of words and phrases of men's own inventing, and which are no where to be met with in the Scripture, such as three Persons and one Divine Essence; agreed, nemine contradicente, That the said Mr. Sayer Rhudd and Mr. John Rhudd be no longer admitted to sit with us as members of this Society._*

The ministers, it will be seen were not to be imposed upon by this specious representation. They well knew that a *doctrine* may be found in the *Scriptures*, for the sake of correctly stating which, without circumlocution, it may be proper to use a *human* epithet. It would be a great absurdity, because the term *morality* is not to be found in Scripture, for a person to infer that holiness, without which no man shall see God, is not enjoined upon all the subjects of the Divine government. But this absurdity was even exceeded by the Messrs. Rhudd, who, because *_three Persons,_* and *_one in essence,_* are not scriptural phrases, disbelieved a doctrine which was plainly revealed by our Lord, when he commanded his apostles to baptize those who believed the gospel, *in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.*

1734: The Conduct of the Society vindicated.

Mr. Crosby, who gives some account of this matter, which he probably had received from Dr. Sayer Rhudd, says, that the ministers, in excluding him from the Board, *_did not treat him like a brother, a scholar, or a gentleman._* This may be very true, if it can be proved that there were no other rules which they were bound to observe besides those of kindness and respect. They might perhaps think that it was a case in which, without renouncing their allegiance to Christ, they could not do otherwise than they did. The command is imperative; *a man that is a heretic, after the first and second admonition, reject.* Titus 3:10. *

(* Dr. James Foster, who borrowed the sentiment from Dr. Whitby, contended, that _he is a heretic who teaches directly contrary to what he inwardly believes;_ if so, says the learned Dr. Doddridge, _the truth or falsehood of his notions will be quite indifferent as to fixing this censure upon him. But Dr. Foster was obliged to allow that there are *fundamental* errors for which, how *sincerely* soever received and maintained, a man ought to be separated from a Christian society._ The only question then is, whether denying the doctrine of the Trinity, or the true and proper divinity of Christ, be such errors? They who believe those doctrines consider them in that light, and all who unite themselves with their churches know this to be their sentiment: should persons then, when they give up these important doctrines, complain of being treated with unchristian severity of they are rejected as unfit members?)

They might conclude, that by his having renounced what they considered as a fundamental doctrine of Christianity, he had forfeited his claim to the character of a Christian brother; and that his literature had nothing to do in a question which related to theological error. And as to his character as a gentleman, they measured him by a higher standard, namely, that of a Christian, and finding him deficient, rejected him from a Society, from which he had in fact excluded himself, by having violated its implied fundamental rules, which rules he himself had subscribed when he became a member of the board. With what consistency could they suffer a person to continue a member of their Society, whom they could not have suffered to preach in their pulpits? Or how could they have warned their hearers to beware of the leaven of Socinianism, which is seminal infidelity, had they continued to associate for religious purposes with an avowed Antitrinitarian?

The early transactions of this Society, for the sake of giving an uninterrupted series, have been recorded in this reign, though some of the events mentioned did not take place till the following.

1725: General Baptist Fund.

The pastors of the church in Paul_s-alley, Barbican, Mr. Joseph Burroughs and Mr. James Foster, in July, 1725, in concert with some private gentlemen, instituted *The General Baptist Fund*, which still exists, and which distributes annually about two hundred pounds. Having been prevented from uniting in the Particular Baptist Fund, from what they considered the narrow and uncatholic principles of the Calvinists, they determined _to extend the aid of their fund to all Ministers who agreed in the practice of baptizing by immersion on a profession of faith, whose exigencies might require it, and who appeared to be sober, pious, and faithful in the discharge of their work._ It provided also for _the assistance of pious young men, who wished to obtain education for the work of the Christian ministry; that a succession of able men might not be wanted, as the necessities of the churches might call for their labours._

The year 1726 was a convulsed period, arising from the restless spirit manifested by the tyrant of France to impose upon the nation the popish Pretender. *

(* This was announced by the King to his Parliament, January 17, 1726-27. _I have,_ said his Majesty, _received information, on which I can entirely depend, that the placing the Pretender upon the throne of this kingdom is one of the

articles of the secret engagements._–Tindal_s Continuation, vol. xxii. Book 27,
p. 466.)

The ministers of the Three Denominations seized this opportunity to manifest their affection to the Monarch, and their loyal zeal in defence of Protestantism and liberty. From the London Gazette, of that period, I have copied the following Address with the gracious reply of the King.

_St. James_s, March 11, 1725-26. The following humble Address of the Protestant Dissenting Ministers of the Three Denominations, in and about the cities of London and Westminster, has been presented to his Majesty by Mr. Joseph Burroughs, accompanied by several of his brethren, introduced by the right honourable the Lord Viscount Townshend, one of his Majesty'_ principal Secretaries of State.

1726: Address to the King.

_TO THE KING_S MOST EXCELLENT MAJESTY.

_The humble Address of the Protestant Dissenting Ministers of the Three Denominations,
in and about the cities of London and Westminster.

_May it please your Majesty, _With hearts full of duty and of gratitude, for the many inestimable blessings we enjoy under your Majesty_s wise and gracious government, we beg leave to express our most hearty concurrence with the rest of your loyal subjects, in a just concern and resentment at the attempts of some foreign powers to violate at once the rights of your Majesty_s crown, and the most valuable interests of your people. Not content to impoverish a rich and flourishing nation, by turning the stream of commerce into another channel, or with the demand of places essential to the security of our trade, acquired in a just war, and ascertained to us by solemn treaties, they would add the worst of mischiefs,—the imposition of a popish pretender.

_This last insult, above all others, raises our just indignation. If ever God, for our sins, should suffer that evil project to take effect, it must entirely reverse all the distinguishing advantages procured to these kingdoms by the glorious Revolution, and since further secured with the expense of so much blood and treasure, and deprive posterity of all the happiness contrived for them by the wise counsels of King William of immortal memory. It must subvert our fundamental laws, which secure the right of your Majesty and your protestant descendants to reign over Britain, as firmly as they secure to British subjects their private rights. It must therefore inevitably involve us in confusion and ruin; and not affect Britons alone, but the liberties of Europe, and the protestant interest in general; for we are persuaded the conviction is growing universal, that neither the one nor the other of these can subsist without the protestant succession.

_Though events are out of all human reach, yet we cannot but hope, from the watchful care of that Divine Providence which hath so often been exerted in our favour, from the justice of the cause in which we are engaged, from the wise precautions already taken by your Majesty, from the fidelity and steadiness of your counsels, from the zeal of your parliament, and from your great and extensive alliances, that such pernicious designs, instead of being attended with success, will be made to issue in the firmer establishment of your Majesty_s throne, and the tranquillity of your people.

_For this we offer up our hearty prayers to the King of kings: and we shall not cease to use our best endeavours to recommend all dutiful and cheerful subjection to your righteous government. And while we are repeating the assurance of our inviolable adherence to your Majesty and your royal house, we believe we speak the sense of all who attend our ministration, who are zealously devoted by principle and affection, as well as by interest, to your person and family.

_May your majesty, secure of transmitting your crown and glory to your royal progeny, and happy in seeing the confirmed health and prosperity of every branch of your family, long live the arbiter of Europe, the patron of the oppressed every where, and the common father of Protestants: and may yourself enjoy for many years in peace, the blessed consequences of all your royal cares; reigning over a people duly sensible of their own felicity; more reformed from public and threatening vices; and more united than ever, in piety to God, on loyalty to their Prince, in liberty to serve their country, and in mutual affection one to the other.

_Signed, in the name and by the direction of the Protestant Dissenting Ministers of the three Denominations, in the cities of London and Westminster, the 9th of March, 1726, by

_JOSEPH BURROUGHS.

1726: Answer of the King.

_To which Address his Majesty was pleased to return the following most gracious Answer.

_I THANK YOU FOR THIS DUTIFUL AND LOYAL ADDRESS. THIS SEASONABLE INSTANCE OF YOUR ZEAL FOR MY PERSON AND GOVERNMENT, CANNOT BUT BE VERY ACCEPTABLE TO ME, AND YOU MAY DEPEND UPON MY CONSTANT PROTECTION.

_His Majesty was pleased to receive them very graciously, and they all had the honour to kiss his Majesty's hand.

1727: Death and Character of George I.

The patriotic Monarch, whose reign we are about to close, died of an apoplexy, at Osnaburg, on Sunday the 11th of June 1727, in the sixty-eighth year of his age. He had reigned justly, in the fear of God. _My maxim,_ said he, soon after he was raised to the English throne, _is never to abandon my friends, to do justice to all the world, and to fear no man._ This was remarkably fulfilled in relation to the protestant Dissenters; the persecuting statutes which had passed in the reign of Anne being repealed by his influence, so that things respecting them were placed upon the same basis on which they had been established by the Act of Toleration; and there can be no doubt that he would have abolished all the tests, so far as they related to them, had not his measures been contravened and counteracted by the intolerance of men, who would have made the excellent bishop Hoadley the victim of their wrath, had not the King restrained their zeal, and checked their malice.

Formed upon the model of William III the first of our monarchs who understood and supported the doctrine of religious liberty, and who obtained for protestant Dissenters the

sanction and protection of law, George I the founder of the royal dynasty in the House of Hanover, true to the principles which brought him to the throne, continued to the last the decided friend of civil and religious liberty. As the enlightened and firm friend of protestant Dissenters, let our children be taught to venerate the name, and to admire the virtues, of the first monarch of the present royal family, whose principles and government secured to them that inheritance, of which his descendents have, by treading in his steps, proved themselves to be the worthy possessors.

The following description of his character is given by Tindal, who was not remarkably delighted with the Hanoverian succession. _As to his more private virtues, he was of a grave, easy, and calm temper, and generous upon all occasions; and the serenity and benignity of his mind discovered themselves in his countenance, and captivated the love and veneration of all who approached him._

It is not possible to state exactly what was the spiritual condition of our churches at the end of this reign. There is reason to fear that Christians in general were at ease in Zion. The Established Church had become, in a great measure, reconciled to the Dissenters, who, being left at quiet from persecution, appear to have sunk into a state of inanity and supineness. There are no proofs of either ministers or people manifesting any zeal for extending the kingdom of Christ in the world. The most they seem to have expected was, that their little meeting-houses should accommodate those families, who were considered as composing the congregation, and that those should meet for worship undisturbed by the sons of Belial who were without, or by the ministry of the pastor within. The Western Association assembling at Bampton, April 12 and 13, 1726, in their letter to the churches, say, _You will permit us to excite you to get a deep sense of the growing errors and abominations which are at this day in the midst of us, and also the lukewarmness justly complained of among the professing people of God in distinction from others; that you with us, may indeed humble your souls greatly, and cry mightily to him, who hath both promised to hear the prayer of the humble, and hath said that the prayer of the upright is his delight. Oh that the Lord may not have occasion to complain, that there are few who stir up themselves to take hold of him!_

VOLUME III.

BOOK 1.

CHAP. IV.

REIGN OF GEORGE II

1727-1760

1727: Accession of George II.

GEORGE II. who succeeded his father in the throne, possessed the same noble, patriotic, and protestant principles. The time he had spent in England had even improved those

excellent dispositions which he had received from his tutors in Hanover, under the auspices of the founder of the present dynasty, whom he accompanied, when he came to take possession of that dignity to which the nation, from the protestant zeal of William III. and under the special care of a Divine providence, had raised him as the protestant heir of former English monarchs; the popish heirs having been formally and legally excluded by the power of Parliament, consisting of King, Lords, and Commons, which can do whatever it pleases respecting the government of the country.

The Dissenting Ministers of the Three Denominations, expressed their loyal affection towards the King, and their gratitude to _Him by whom kings reign,_ by presenting the following address, printed in the London Gazette.

1727: Address to the King.

_St. James_s, July 4, 1727. The following humble Address of the Protestant Dissenting Ministers, in and about the cities of London and Westminster. This was read by Mr. John Evans, accompanied by some of his brethren, introduced by the Vice Chamberlain Stanhope, in the absence of his Grace the Duke of Grafton, Lord Chamberlain of his Majesty_s household.

_TO THE KING_S MOST EXCELLENT MAJESTY.

_May it please your Majesty

Whilst your majesty_s royal declaration so tenderly mentions the unexpected death of your dearest father, all loyal subjects, as becomes their different stations, are mourning the loss of one common father to his people. The protestant Dissenting Ministers can never forget his paternal favours and condescensions. And we beg your Majesty will give us leave, on this great occasion, to show our affecting sense of that awful providence, which hath finished a reign so important and gracious as that of George I. By this mighty stroke the world is bereaved of one of the wisest and best of Princes, and the reformed religion of its chief glory and defence.

_But the immediate and peaceful succession of George II. dries up our tears. A protestant heir thus coming to the throne of his father is a new blessing to Britain: a Prince who gave the world so early proof of his spirit and courage in the field, who hath shown so much goodness since his abode in this kingdom, and given us such agreeable pledges of happiness, upon his wearing the imperial crown of these realms. This consideration, with that of a Queen Consort entirely protestant, and universally beloved, fills our hearts with joy that greatly and justly exceeds all our sorrow. By this means the reformed religion gains fresh support and glory; and all transactions for the peace and settlement of Europe proceed with renewed life and vigour. Thus when it pleased Almighty God (by whom kings reign) to inspire your glorious predecessor King William, to lay the foundation of the protestant succession in the illustrious and numerous family of Brunswick, he provided both an effectual relief of our present sorrows, and a lasting guard against future dangers.

_We rejoice in that wise conduct, and those kind disposals of Providence, which have tied up the hands of all declared enemies to your august house; so that they have it not in their power at present by any means to disturb your Majesty_s proceedings and our joys:

this is such a confirmation of the kingdom in your Majesty's illustrious family, as, we trust, will for ever extinguish their hopes, who have hitherto vainly struggled for a popish Pretender.

_On our parts, we can assure your Majesty of hearts full of love and affection to your person and government. And, as far as it belongs to our stations and characters, we shall not fail to teach the duties owing to crowned heads, and practise them ourselves on every occasion. It is with pleasure we can further assure your Majesty, that the protestant Dissenters, we believe to a man, are of the same loyal sentiments; and we doubt not our continued share in those liberties which your Majesty hath declared most dear to you. We rely upon your princely wisdom and care, to do everything that may strengthen and unite sincere Christians and protestants; and heartily wish our suffering brethren abroad the same blessings with ourselves.

_We shall not cease to offer up unfeigned and ardent prayers to Almighty God, that your Majesty may long live the defender of our religion, laws, and liberties, and the succourer of the distressed; that you may be prosperous in perfecting the great work now depending beyond the seas; that decaying piety may revive throughout your own dominions, and an universal probity of manners may be promoted; that, with your royal Consort, you may reign in the hearts of all your subjects, and in your royal issue, may reign from one generation to another; and that all manner of blessings may be multiplied on the house, person, and administration of your sacred Majesty.

1727: Answer of the King.

_To which address his Majesty was pleased to return this gracious answer.

_I THANK YOU FOR THIS LOYAL AND AFFECTIONATE ADDRESS. YOU MAY BE ASSURED OF MY PROTECTION, AND OF MY CARE AND ATTENTION TO SUPPORT THE PROTESTANT INTEREST.

_his majesty was pleased to receive them very graciously, and they had all the honour to kiss his Majesty's hand.

_Afterwards they were introduced to her Majesty, by the Right Honourable the Earl of Grantham, Lord Chamberlain of her Majesty's Household; when Dr. Edmund Calamy spoke to her Majesty as follows.

1727: Address to the Queen.

_May it please your Majesty,

_We cheerfully embrace the opportunity that presents itself, of expressing our duty to your Majesty, encouraged by the conjunction of goodness with greatness, and that commanding air of life and sweetness, that animates all who have the honour to approach you.

_We sincerely congratulate your ascending the throne, which we hope will prove easy, being adorned with those noble virtues and particularly with that benevolence to mankind, which are so conspicuous in your Majesty.

_When a regard to religion could prevail with a Princess of your high birth, even in the earliest part of your life, to slight the prospect of a crown, which had visible danger to conscience attending it; that kind heaven at length should reach you forth another, as remarkable for its safety as its glory, is such a return of Divine Providence, as we cannot but admire with great thankfulness, though without the least surprise; since he whose kingdom ruleth over all, has fixed it as a standing measure of his government, that such as honour him, he will honour.

_May your Majesty_s happiness be lasting, and your name ever carry a lasting sound to every British ear; may both your Majesties have a yearly accession to new glories and comforts; may your royal offspring, educated with so much care, and of whom we have such raised expectations, prove eminent blessings to the reformed churches both at home and abroad, and may an infinitely nobler crown than this earth can afford, and that will never be laid down, be added hereafter by the same Almighty Hand, by which your Majesty has been so remarkably distinguished hitherto.

_These, Madam, are, and will be the ardent prayer of the protestant Dissenters, who having nothing more at heart than the continuance and advancement of piety, truth, and love, loyalty, liberty, and prosperity, promise themselves your Majesty_s countenance and protection.

_Her Majesty was pleased to give them a very gracious Answer; and they all had the honour to kiss her Majesty_s hand.

1727: The King an Enemy to Persecution.

The King had soon an opportunity afforded him of proving the sincerity of his royal declaration: for though time had removed many of the Jacobites, and self-love and posts of honour had converted others to more moderate principles; or, at least, had led them to adopt a more prudent line of conduct in submitting to a wise and just government; yet, the spirit of the divine right of kings and priests sometimes stalked abroad terrifying, if not injuring, the peaceable protestant Dissenters.

The candour, and learning, and talents of a Doddridge, one would have thought, might have disarmed even the serpent of intolerance of its venomous sting: but there are persons whom no kindness can subdue, whom no excellency can win. This was the case with some of the established clergy in the neighbourhood of Northampton, who were not able to behold the existence of a Dissenting academy. Knowing there was an obsolete Act on the statute book respecting schoolmasters, (the 13th of Charles II.) which the Toleration Act had not noticed; they resolved to commence a prosecution to enforce the penalties of the Act against this pious and disinterested man, who had not envied them their clerical distinctions, nor wished to possess their emoluments. This being made known to the King, he instantly put a stop to it by an exercise of the prerogative, declaring that
_THERE SHOULD BE NO PERSECUTION FOR THE SAKE OF CONSCIENCE
DURING HIS REIGN._ *

(* This circumstance is mentioned in _Orton_s Life of Doddridge._ The Rev. Thomas Tayler, formerly pastor of the presbyterian church in Carter-lane, Doctors_ Commons, has lately informed the writer, that he spent a year in the house of Dr. Doddridge, at Northampton, previously to his coming to London in the year 1760; and that he had heard from the family that there were *several instances* in which the King had issued a *nolo prosequi* for the protection of this defenceless Non-conformist minister.)

1730: State of the Churches.

The apathy and indifference to serious religion which prevailed at this period, evinced a most lamentable state of irreligion. Nor was this wonderful, when the entire body of the established church expended all their zeal in pleading for the observance of mere ceremonies, and in delivering dry ethical essays, which they called sermons; but which might have been composed had there been no New Testament, as they were totally destitute of every doctrine connected with Jesus Christ, and him crucified. Under such a

ministry the hardened sinner becomes more callous to the convictions of conscience, and the pious believer, if such a one is ever found there, proves the truth of the poet's remark,

The hungry sheep look up and are not fed.

In such places, too, we may be certain that the great bulk of the inhabitants of parishes will be *absenters*, even though they are not Dissenters from the established church.

Though there is reason to fear that the churches of the Baptist Denomination were far from a state of spiritual prosperity, yet, there was a goodly number of ministers among them, both in London and the country, that maintained the doctrines of the gospel, and aimed to promote pure and undefiled religion among the people.

An extract from the Circular Letter of the Western Association, assembled at Trowbridge, May 21 and 22, 1730, will serve to supply the want of other information on this subject.

From some of the churches, say they, _we have received accounts of considerable additions made to their numbers in the year past. These are blessings that call for our thankful acknowledgments, and in which we do, and ought to rejoice; and we doubt not but you will rejoice with us; especially, when to this we add that peace from abroad, as well as among ourselves, which we enjoy; and the great freedom we have of serving God according to our consciences, and the great plenty of the means of grace which abounds among us. These, beloved brethren, are things which our forefathers desired to see, but saw them not; and to hear, but heard them not. How great, therefore, are our obligations to the distinguishing goodness of God, who has brought us forth in the days of light and liberty, and cast our lines in so pleasant a place, and given us so goodly an heritage. But then, on the other hand, how much is it to be lamented that all this goodness should have so little effect upon us; and that under all these favours of providence and expressions of divine grace, we remain so barren and unprofitable as we do! Several letters we have received, complain of the decay of spiritual religion; and we greatly fear there is much ground and reason for these complaints, and that these are not merely words of course. We hope, therefore, beloved brethren, you will bear with us if we express our fears and concern for you, and our desires for your welfare, in words of counsel and exhortation with regard to the best means of reviving decayed religion: for to write the same things to you, which we have formerly written, to us will not be grievous; but for you it is safe.

Signed, JOSEPH JEFFRIES, Moderator,

And sixteen others.

1727: Society of Approved Ministers of the Three Denominations.

The Dissenting ministers in London had frequently united, as we have seen, in declaring their sentiments of loyalty to the family of Brunswick; but they had not till this period formed any *Society* for the purpose of mutual consultation and co-operation. Immediately after they had presented the Address on his Majesty's accession to the throne, they held a general meeting of the Three Denominations, at the George, in Ironmonger-lane, July 11, 1727, at which meeting several resolutions were unanimously adopted, which formed into a body all approved ministers, whether Presbyterians, Independents, or Baptists, living within ten miles of the cities of London and Westminster. They also agreed, that a committee should be chosen to manage the affairs of the general Body, consisting of *seven* Presbyterians, *six* Independents, and *six* Baptists: these were to agree upon the

persons who were to form the Society, and to call the whole Body together when there should appear to them an occasion for their assembling.

The first members of the committee appointed for the Baptists, were the Rev. John Noble, Joseph Burroughs, Dr. Kinch, Thomas Richardson, Thomas Harrison, and David Rees. The number of approved Baptist ministers amounted to forty-five; of Independents, to forty-nine; and of Presbyterians, to seventy-three.

The Committee soon found an opportunity of exerting itself for the benefit of their brethren in Ireland. At a meeting held at Founders_ Hall, April 8, 1728, Mr. John Noble in the chair, it was reported that a bill had been transmitted from the Parliament of Ireland, containing a clause, which it was thought would be injurious to the Dissenting interest of that kingdom. Measures were immediately adopted to prevent the bill from passing here; and at a subsequent meeting, held at the same place, July 8, it was reported that, upon the application which had been made, the clause excepted against had been entirely erased by the King and Council.

At an extraordinary meeting of the Committee held at North_s Coffee House, December 11, in this year, Mr. Noble in the chair, it was proposed, on account of the happy arrival of the Prince [Fredrick] in this kingdom, that seven persons should wait upon his Royal Highness the next morning. Dr. Calamy was desired to deliver the Address, and the ministers agreed to go to St. James_s, _with their usual ministerial habits, as cloaks,_ &c. The Baptists were Dr. Kinch and Mr. Richardson. They were introduced by the Gentleman of his Royal Highness_s bed-chamber, Lord George Cavendish, and had the honour to kiss his Royal Highness_s hand. It appears, however, that the general Body thought the Committee had overstepped their instructions, as they resolved at their next annual meeting at Salters_ Hall, _that the Committee shall have no power to present any Address, or make any compliment, in the name of the Body, to the throne, or to any of the royal family, upon any occasion, without first calling together the whole body._

1729: Proposed Meetings for Prayer.

Hitherto the Committee had confined its attention simply to public and political matters; but in October 1729 they agreed, _that, in consideration of the visible decay of serious and practical religion, it should be recommended to the ministers of their several denominations to preach on the subject of public worship; and that the second Lord_s-day in the ensuing February, would be a proper time to commence preaching on that subject._ They agreed also to consult their brethren of their respective denominations _concerning the expediency of appointing hours of prayer, upon occasion of the visible decay of serious practical religion._ This pious project, however, failed on some account, which is not mentioned; it being reported at the next meeting, _that their brethren could not at present agree upon the measure of appointing hours of prayer in concert, upon that account._

From this time the ministers do not appear to have attempted the promotion of any devotional object, but to have confined their co-operation to those political circumstances which were considered to affect their interests as protestant Dissenters.

The Deputies for defending the civil rights of Dissenters originated in this Society, towards the close of the year 1732. It was agreed by the general body of ministers, October 3, _that the civil affairs relating to the general interest should be referred to gentlemen._ In consequence of this resolution a meeting was held at the meeting-house in Silver-street, November 29, Mr. Holden in the chair; when the gentlemen who were

appointed a Committee, were instructed to report their opinion to two persons, chosen out of each Dissenting congregation, by the subscribers, within ten miles of London. This being reported by Mr. (afterwards Dr.) Chandler, secretary to the ministers, at their general meeting, December 5, they agreed _to comply with the request of the Committee of gentlemen._

The Society of Ministers of the Three Denominations, in the year 1736, first assembled at Dr. Williams_s Library, Red Cross-street; where they have continued to hold their meetings ever since, by the consent, annually given, of the trustees of that property.

1733: Origin of the Widows Fund Society.

The Dissenting churches in London, of the different denominations, were at this period desirous of co-operating in works of Christian benevolence; and it is a gratifying employment for the historian to record the origin of a Society, which, at that time, united the hearts and hands of liberal Dissenters; and which has ever since proved not only a bond of union among them, but, by sending forth refreshing streams of comfort, has caused the hearts of thousands of widows to sing for joy.

The smallness of the salaries which Dissenting ministers in general receive for their ministerial labours, renders it impossible for them to lay up for their widows and children, who, therefore, in the event of their deaths, are often left in the most afflictive circumstances. The congregations, too, which are thus left destitute, often experience great difficulty in supporting the public ministry, and, from being compelled to obtain an immediate successor in the pastoral office, are put to so great an expense, that they cannot extend any aid to the family of their deceased pastor, however desirous they may be in doing so.

Many of these worthy and destitute females were in possession, at the time of their marriage, of independent fortunes, which were afterwards gradually consumed in supplying the necessities of their families, and in obtaining education for their children; and all of them, by their industry, frugality, and prudence, contributed essentially towards the prosperity of the congregations, whom their affectionate and disinterested husbands served; and had therefore a claim upon the esteem and gratitude of the Dissenting body. This claim was founded, not only upon the *charity* which should be shown towards those *who are widows indeed, desolate, yet trusting in God*; but also upon the *justice* of those who had been benefited by the united services of their husbands and themselves, in spending and being spent for the welfare of the church.

1733: Widows Fund Society.

Consideration of this nature, induced the Rev. Dr. Chandler, pastor of the Presbyterian congregation in the Old Jewry, in the year 1733, to propose the establishment of a WIDOWS_ FUND; _the benefits of which should extend to the families of such ministers of Presbyterian, Independent, and Baptist Denominations, as at their death stood accepted and approved as such by the Body of Ministers of the denomination to which they respectively belonged, and died so poor as not to leave their widows and children in sufficient substance._*

(* Mr. Wilson, in his account of Dr. Samuel Chandler, says, vol. ii. p. 379, _As he was a man of the strictest honour and integrity, so he possessed no small share of benevolence. The plan of that noble Fund, which has proved so happy a source of relief to the widows of poor Dissenting ministers, originated with him; and a considerable part of the sum first subscribed towards it, was procured

through his interest with persons of opulence. One singular circumstance relating to this fund, which is to be ascribed to his management, is, that the direction of the business is in the hands of lay gentlemen only. This institution, alone, ought to perpetuate Dr. Chandler's name with respect to future generations. _ Since this was written, some ministers are added to the Committee.)

The rules and orders of this Society were agreed upon March 5, 1733. The union and liberality which existed among the founders of this excellent charity may be judged of from the following resolution. _ That the widows and children of such ministers, dying in such circumstances as this Society shall judge necessitous, are to be relieved without making any difference on account of their going under the denomination of Presbyterians, Independents, or Baptists.

The Society was to be governed by twenty-four Managers annually chosen; amongst whom there were always to be some of each denomination.

1733: Utility of the Fund.

The annual sum granted was, to English widows L5, and to Welsh widows L3, each. For putting out an orphan apprentice they allowed L10; or, if going out to service was preferred, they gave for clothes L5.

The amount of the first property that was funded for these purposes, was 162*l.* 14*s.* It was agreed that an annual collection sermon should be preached at the Old Jewry Meeting. The first sermon was delivered by Mr. Chandler, in 1736; after which they collected 34*l.* 14*s.* 8 ½ *d.*: and what was afterwards given made it amount to 163*l.* 19*s.* 8 ½ *d.*

The annual sums voted to widows were not altered till the year 1766. Upwards of 150 persons were then assisted annually, and 900*l.* distributed. Their names were then entered without being classed, as has been the custom of late years, under the distinctive denominations to which their deceased husbands belonged.

The sermons have been always preached by ministers alternately of each denomination. The Baptist ministers employed between 1733 and 1760, were Messrs. Samuel Wilson, Joseph Burroughs, Joseph Stennett, Robert Cornthwaite, Charles Bulkley, and John Brine. *

(* The number of widows relieved in the year 1820, was 182;— viz. Presbyterians, 36; Independents, 46; Baptists, 72; Welch widows, not distinguished by their denominations, 28. Some of these have received from this bounty for nearly 40 years.)

1731: Lime-street Lectures.

At the time this Society was formed, infidelity prevailed in the nation to so great a degree, that the hearts of many trembled for the ark of God. They considered that as, on the one hand, fatal errors had never been propagated with greater zeal by the enemies of the gospel; so, on the other, there had never been more lukewarmness and indifference respecting the state of the church among its professed friends. Mr. James Foster, and others, had contended for the sufficiency of reason to decide upon the doctrines of revelation, and even to reject those which were, if not incompatible with reason, yet much beyond the ability of corrupted reason to comprehend, or of a depraved heart to approve. For the purpose of counteracting these errors among professed Christians, a weekly evening lecture was instituted at the meeting-house in Paved-alley, Lime-street,

and *nine* of the London ministers were appointed to preach it. Two of these were Baptists; Messrs. John Gill and Samuel Wilson: seven were Independents; Messrs. Thomas Bradbury, Robert Bragge, Peter Goodwin, Thomas Hall, John Merriam, John Sladen, and Abraham Taylor. The lecture commenced November 12, 1730, and was continued till April 8, 1731. The sermons, which were upon the most important subjects of Christianity, were published, in two octavo volumes, in June, 1732.

1732: Dispute between Messrs. Taylor and Gill.

This union of the Baptist ministers with the Independents turned out very unpleasantly for Mr. (afterwards Dr.) Gill, and must have produced an unfavourable impression upon the public mind. What is here alluded to, arose from the following circumstance: Messrs. Taylor, Gill, and some others of the lecturers, agreed on preparing their sermons for the press, to read them over in company with each other, for the purpose of rendering mutual assistance; and to suggest alterations, or improvements, should that appear to be necessary. Mr. Gill had observed in Mr. Taylor's sermons, when delivered from the pulpit, some passages which he considered as contrary to truth, and as calculated to offend many pious persons; he therefore resolved, when the sermons *

(* Each minister preached two or more sermons.)

should be read privately, that he would point out those exceptionable passages, and suggest such an alteration of them as should render them agreeable to his own view of revealed truth. When the sermons were read from the manuscript copy, those objectionable passages, to the great satisfaction of Mr. Gill, did not appear, from which he inferred that Mr. Taylor had himself discovered their incorrectness. When, however, the volumes were published, he not only found these passages printed, but, as he thought, with additional severity. The object of them was to censure the doctrines of *God's everlasting love to the elect, their eternal union with Christ, &c.* Mr. Gill, therefore, considered himself as called upon to address a printed letter to Mr. Taylor, on which he defended these doctrines, which, according to his view of things, had not only been vehemently but grossly misrepresented and reproached, Mr. Taylor having called them *immoral conceits,* and having styled those who preached them, *ignorant enthusiastic preachers.* Though Mr. Gill's letter was thought by persons in general to be written with great respect, temper, and candour, yet his defending the doctrines which Mr. Taylor had opposed, excited the charge of *Antinomianism* against him, and exposed him to much contumely and reproach.

Six years after this Mr. (who had then become Dr.) Taylor resumed the controversy, by calling Dr. Gill's sentiments on those subjects *a filthy dream, – an extravagant position, – a dangerous tenet, big with absurdity, – a rude, ignorant, horrible blasphemy, – invented by one of the vilest and lewdest heretics, – and an Antinomian paradox.* Mr. Gill replied with more warmth than he afterwards attempted to justify, acknowledging, *that he had said some things in the heat of controversy, which, though they were consistent with truth, were not agreeable to his natural inclination.* It is certain that Dr. Taylor had highly provoked Mr. Gill, and had employed terms and innuendos which no station, however eminent, nor any diploma, however honourable, could warrant him to use. *

(* The following anecdote was related by the late Mr. John Ryland to the Rev. Mr. Toplady. When Dr. Gill first wrote against Dr. Abraham Taylor, some of the friends of the latter called on Dr. Gill to dissuade him from proceeding, telling

him that he would lose the esteem, and *the subscription* of some wealthy persons, who were Dr. Taylor's friends. *Don't tell me of losing,* replied Dr. Gill, *I value nothing in comparison with Gospel truths; I AM NOT AFRAID TO BE POOR.*)

1732: Origin of the Societies of Deputies.

The reader will now be led to the perusal of a narration relating to a very different subject than angry theological controversy.

The management of the public affairs of the Dissenters appear to have been left principally to the ministers up to this period, (1732.) In 1714, when the Schism Bill was pending, they had called the whole body together; and in the year 1717 they had been assisted by some lay-gentlemen *

(* The author uses this term, not because he wishes Dissenting ministers to be called *the clergy*, but because it has become *technical*, as applied to the Deputies appointed to protect the civil rights of Dissenters.)

of each denomination. But as it was now thought desirable to make a direct application to the legislature for the repeal of the Corporation and Test Acts, the Rev. Mr. (afterwards Dr.) Chandler who was the Secretary of the General Body, was desired to summon, November 9, 1732, some of the leading laymen among the Dissenters. Among these was Lord Barrington, who had before assisted them, *

(* This Noble Lord was the father of the present Bishop of Durham, and of the late Admiral, and Judge, of the same name. Titles of rank, and connections with the State, have generally destroyed persons as protestant Dissenters.)

and several others; the meeting was held at the Meeting-house, Silver-street, London. Without noticing all the circumstances which took place upon this occasion, it is sufficient for the purpose of history to remark, that a Committee of twenty-one persons was appointed to consider, and report at a subsequent meeting, when and in what manner it would be proper to make the proposed application to parliament. Another general meeting being held on the 29th of the same month, the Committee reported, that they had consulted many persons of consequence in the State; that they found every reason to believe such an application would not then be successful; and that therefore they did not think it advisable to make the attempt. This report was not very cordially received. The Committee was enlarged by the addition of four other persons, and was instructed to reconsider the subject. It was also resolved, that each congregation of Presbyterians, Independents, and Baptists, in and within ten miles of London, should be applied to upon the subject.

1735: Test and Corporation Acts.

It was accordingly reported to each congregation, that *the Body of Dissenters* had met to consider what methods were proper to be taken at the present juncture, in order to apply for a repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts; and that they had agreed that *two Deputies* from every congregation should receive the report of the Committee to whom that affair was referred. An assembly of the Deputies thus appointed was held on the 29th of December. It soon became evident, though they could obtain no encouragement respecting the particular object for which they were appointed, that there were things constantly taking place which made such a body of lay-gentlemen necessary; and therefore, at a general meeting of the Deputies held at Salters-hall Meeting-house, on January 14, 1735-36, it was resolved, *That there should be an annual choice of Deputies*

to take care of the civil affairs of Dissenters._ For the purpose of carrying the resolution into effect, it was further resolved, _That the chairman do write to the ministers of the several congregations some convenient time before the second Wednesday in January next, to return the list of Deputies to him fourteen days before that day._ On January 12, 1736-37, Dr. Benjamin Avery, who had been minister of the Presbyterian congregation in Bartholomew Close, but was now practising as a physician, was chosen chairman, which office he filled with reputation, for twenty-seven years, until his death in 1764.

1738: Application for their Repeal.

In 1738 the DEPUTIES, as we must henceforth call them, having determined to renew their application to the legislature, prepared and printed a paper, explanatory of their views and feelings on the subject of the test laws.

This was entitled, _Reasons for repealing or explaining so much of the Corporation and Test Acts, as relates to the taking the Sacrament of the Lord_s Supper as a qualification for office._ Two or three extracts will be sufficient for our purpose. They say, _The protestant Dissenters can and do readily take the oaths of allegiance and supremacy required by these Acts; but some of them scruple receiving the sacrament after the manner of the Church of England; and many of them refuse to take the sacrament, after the manner of any church, as a qualification for office.

The TEST ACT was designed wholly against POPISH RECUSANTS, as the title shows. At the time the nation thought itself in danger of popery, from the Prince on the throne, and the presumptive heir. The receiving of the sacrament, according to the usage of the Church of England, was then thought some security. But when circumstances are so much varied, and we have a Prince on the throne, and the succession fixed in a house, zealously concerned to support the protestant religion, surely such a provision can no longer be thought necessary.

The Dissenters, from their zeal against popery, and fearing lest the papists should have made any advantage of their refusal or opposition, generously acquiesced in having this restraint laid upon them, not doubting but such disinterested conduct would, in gratitude, justice, and good policy, have long since entitled them to relief.

They conclude by saying, _It is therefore humbly hoped, that those clauses of these Acts, which require the taking the sacrament as a qualification for office, will be repealed, or so explained, as may be necessary to give relief in the premises. *

(* *Sketch of the History and Proceedings of the Deputies*, p. 9, 10.)

1738: The Application rejected.

After these _Reasons_ had been circulated among the members of parliament, a motion was made in the House of Commons for leave to bring in a bill to repeal so much of the *Test Act*, as obliges all persons, who are admitted to any office, civil or military, to receive the sacrament of the Lord_s supper within a time limited by the said Act. A long debate ensued; and the motion was rejected by a majority of 188 to 89.

The reader will perceive that this application related merely to the *sacramental test*. They properly stated, that the ordinance of the Lord_s Supper was appointed by the Lord Jesus Christ, _only for religious purposes;_ adding, _that the using of it for civil offices, seems, in a great measure, to have occasioned that disregard and contempt of this institution in particular, and of religion in general, of which all good men have so long and so justly complained._

The petitioning Dissenters were doubtless anxious to be rendered eligible to hold offices in corporations, &c. And therefore they stated, that there was nothing in their principles to render them unworthy of the trust by the government; further adding, that the framers of the obnoxious Acts did not contemplate the exclusion of Protestant Dissenters, but merely of POPISH RECUSANTS.

But even this concession could not be obtained from the enemies of the Dissenters: they chose rather to let the disgraceful and impious enactment remain upon the statute book, that any person who should accept any civil or military office, should also be compelled to insult the Majesty of heaven and earth by eating bread and drinking wine, not in remembrance of HIM by whom it was appointed merely for spiritual purposes, but in compliance with an Act of Parliament, which had been found convenient, for the purpose of exclusively increasing the wealth and power of that religious sect which was chartered and endowed by the State.

1733: Mr. Hollis's Legacy to the Baptist Fund.

In the year 1733, Mr. John Hollis, a Baptist member of the church in Pinners_Hall, left to the poor of several Baptist churches *eleven hundred pounds*, New South-sea Annuities, and gave in his Will the following instructions for its distribution, &c.

_Goodman_s-fields, March 21, 1733.

_To the Ministers and Messengers of the Particular Baptist Fund, who meet at Pinners_Hall.

_Whereas, by my Will of this date, I have given to my Son Isaac Hollis eleven hundred pounds, New South-sea Annuity Stock, in trust for such uses as I should by writing under my hand direct and appoint;— now I have ordered and appointed him, by writing under my hand of this date, to transfer the said eleven hundred pounds Annuity Stock to the Treasurer, or Treasurers of the Particular Baptist Fund, in trust, for the Ministers and Messengers of the said Fund, for them to dispose of as I should direct and appoint. Now I do desire the Ministers and Messengers of the aforesaid Fund, to take a Defeasance from the Treasurer, or Treasurers, for the said eleven hundred pounds Stock, in like manner as they do for the Fund Stock. _Now my will is, that you dispose of the produce of this eleven hundred pounds New South-sea Annuity Stock, in manner following, viz.

_The produce of one thousand pounds of the said Stock, you shall distribute yearly to the Deacons of the several Churches hereafter named, in the month of February, or March: and my will is, that the said Deacons distribute the said money amongst the Poor of their Churches immediately, in the same manner as they used to do in my lifetime.

_The remaining one hundred pounds Annuity_s produce, my will is, that the Secretary have twenty shillings a year for his keeping account in the Fund-book, of the receipts and payments of this my Legacy: and the remaining three pounds of the produce of the one hundred pounds Annuity, I give to be spent by you in a dinner every year.

_My will further is, that if any of the said Churches should come to be dissolved, then their part or share in this my Legacy shall be given to the Deacons of the other remaining Churches, for them to distribute to their poor. And if the Dividend of the Annuity should

be lessened, then the Legacies to the several Churches_ poor must be reduced in proportion.

_ And I do desire, that this my Order and Appointment be entered in your Fund-book to remain and abide as a standing rule for the disposal of this my Legacy.

1733: Directions for the Distribution.

	?.	s.	d.
1. To the Deacons of Mr. DEW_S Church, I appoint	4	0	0per annum
2. To the Deacons of the late Mr. WALLIN_S Church	4	0	0
3. To the Deacons of the late Mr. RHUDD_S, now Mr. BRAITHWAITE_S Church	4	0	0
4. To the Deacons of the late Mr. RICHARDSON_S Church	4	0	0
5. To the Deacons of Mr. BRINE_S Church	4	0	0
6. To the Deacons of Mr. GIFFORD_S Church	4	0	0
7. To the Deacons of Mr. ARNOLD_S Church	4	0	0
8. To the Deacons of Mr. REES_S Church	4	0	0
9. To the Deacons of Mr. GILL_S Church	4	0	0
10. To the Deacons of Mr. WILSON_S church	4	0	0
To the secretary	1	0	0
To the Ministers and Messengers of the Fund, for a dinner	3	0	0

Witness my hand the day and year above written,

JOHN HOLLIS._

The Deacons of each church, when they received this money during Mr. Hollis_s lifetime, gave a receipt for the same, to be distributed to the Poor of the several Churches, over and above the usual allowance made to them by these Churches. After his death, the receipt was given to one of the Treasurers of the Baptist Fund.

Some further particulars of this benevolent man, and of others of the Hollis family, have been already given in our history of the Baptist Fund.

1735: Salters Hall Lecture against Popery.

In the year 1735, the nation was under considerable alarm concerning the increase of Popery. For the purpose of counteracting it, a morning week-day lecture was established at Salters_ Hall, and twelve of the most eminent London ministers were selected to preach a course of sermons against the principal errors of the church of Rome. Ten of these were Presbyterians, one an Independent, and Mr. Joseph Burroughs was a Baptist.

1735: Animadversions of Mr. Grantham Killingworth.

After these sermons had been preached and published, Mr. Grantham Killingworth, physician at Norwich, and a general Baptist, published what he entitled, _A Supplement to the Sermons lately preached at Salters_ Hall against Popery, containing just and useful remarks on another GREAT CORRUPTION therein omitted._ *

(* The work is an octavo volume, closely printed, containing seventy-four pages.)

The design of this writer is thus frankly declared, _Having read over the sermons preached at Salters_ Hall against *Popery*, as they came out, I was very much pleased to observe that, generally speaking, they were judicious and well composed; the arguments urged against the Romanists strong, and, as I am fully persuaded, really unanswerable.

But then, at the same time, I could not help taking notice, that those arguments bear full as hard on some things held and practised by those communities, of which all the gentlemen (but one) concerned in the Lectures, are ministers. This must needs take off the force of their reasoning with Papists, who, being urged with such arguments as equally affect their opponents, will always insinuate that those ministers do not believe their own reasons to be cogent, since they think them not sufficiently convincing to induce their own communities to lay aside *infant sprinkling*, which, upon due reflection, will appear equally liable to the same objections with the traditionary practices of the Church of Rome.

This consideration induced me to show their mistake in that particular, by their own arguments, which seemed the most likely way to convince, not only the ministers themselves, but also their followers; because their employing them against the Papists, shows that they have a good opinion of their validity. And I am fully persuaded, that if they can be induced to lay aside the practice here treated of, they may oppose Popery to more advantage another time, and urge the same arguments with a much better grace. In the execution of this work, the writer finds abundant materials for his purpose; and by substituting the terms *infant sprinkling*, for the word *Popery*, he proves, that all the arguments used against Popery, as unscriptural and of human invention, apply with equal force against infant sprinkling.

1735: Sufficiency of Scripture, the great Protestant Argument.

As a specimen of Mr. Killingworth's manner of reasoning, the following short extract is made. _As to *infant sprinkling*, I affirm, in the words of Mr. Neale, on *The Supremacy*,— _There is not the least mention of it in Scripture; *nor is there anything like it in the whole New Testament*. Surely St. Paul must have been guilty of a very great omission not to mention it!_ Mr. Smith, on *The Authority of the Church*, says, _If this was the case, methinks the apostles should have taken care to leave it upon record, or at least to have given us some hint [of it] in Scripture._ Mr. Chandler, in his *Notes of the True Church*, says, _We have no full and certain account of the doctrine taught by Christ and his apostles, but from the records of the New Testament; and as these contain the whole revelation of the gospel, all that we are to believe and practise as Christians, it is an undeniable consequence, that we can no otherwise demonstrate our subjection and fidelity to Christ, as Lord and lawgiver in his Church, than by our care in acquainting ourselves with the sacred records of truth, and religiously adhering to them as the only rule and standard of our faith and worship; the adhering to which is an essential note of the Christian church. This, therefore, is the only true antiquity to which, as Christians, we are to appeal._ Dr. Wright, on *Scripture and Tradition*, says, _The church of God, the true church of Christ, throughout all nations, is built entirely upon the Scriptures._ To which all the rest agree:— Dr. Harris, on *Transubstantiation*; Dr. Earle, on *Purgatory*; Dr. Hunt, on *Penance*; Mr. Bayes, on *Worship*; Mr. Barker, on *Popery the great Corruption*; Mr. Newman, on *Merit*; Mr. Lowman, on *Schism*; Mr. Leavesly, on *Reformation*; and Dr. Hughes, on *the Veneration of the Saints*. Their uniform consent appears in the following passages. _We acknowledge nothing as an authoritative rule of faith, but the Scriptures, the great charter of the Christian church; —The Holy Scripture, and that is the religion of Protestants;— _Whose religion is Scripture alone;— _The great rule to direct us how we are to worship God;— _The Scriptures teaches us the duty God requires of man;— _We own it to be our only and entire rule;— _The Christian church is properly represented as

one body, or a society, incorporate by the charter of the gospel, under Jesus Christ as supreme head and governor;— _The worship of God is a first and principal duty of the law of Nature, and of all religion: to worship God according to the directions of the Christian revelation, is a chief duty of Christianity;— _Christ and his apostles, by preaching and delivering the gospel truth, and by warning us of false apostles and deceitful workers, call all men every where to adhere to the truth as it is in Jesus;— _In a word,*nothing must be allowed in God_s worship but what we have his warrant for; so that the very silence of Scripture is enough to condemn the praying of saints.*— Then, assuredly, _ (concludes Mr. Killingworth,) _the *silence of Scripture* must equally condemn *infant sprinkling*. _

The third edition of this work was published in a short time, in the preface to which the author says, he has answered all the objections which he had heard brought against the *Supplement*. He also, in the year 1738, published a pamphlet of thirty-nine octavo pages, in vindication of his former work. This is entitled, _An Appendix to the Sermons lately preached at Salters_ Hall, &c. containing an Answer to Mr. Emlyn_s previous *Question*, &c.—also, a Reply to a Pamphlet, entitled, A JUST REBUKE TO OUR PERFIDIOUS AND FALSE BRETHREN;— in which (Reply) the charge of PERSECUTION is justly answered, and the case of Mr. John Child stated, and freed from the *Rebuke_s* gross misrepresentations. _

That the reader may form some idea of the manner in which Mr. Killingworth was treated by his opponent, who called his own work _*A Just Rebuke*, &c._ I shall quote one paragraph. Addressing the Baptists, he says, _*Ye do always resist the Holy Ghost; as your fathers did, so do ye*; as your fathers, the Anabaptists of the last and former generations, ever since the beginning of the reformation have done, so do ye of the present generation. But God will deal with them in his own time and way, as he did with *Korah* and his company, and as he hath always done with all other proud despisers and contemners of his faithful ministers in all ages. I will mention but one instance; and that is one of their own brethren, Mr. John Child, an Anabaptist minister: what a fearful example of divine displeasure did God make of him, for a like case with this of theirs, viz. publishing a book unjustly reflecting on some of God_s ministers and people. _

Mr. Killingworth very calmly inquires, whether the cases were parallel? whether he had *maliciously reviled* those he had written against? whether Mr. Child wrote a book against *infant sprinkling*, or against those ministers that practised it, while he remained in the communion of the Baptists? _The case, _ says he, _of Mr. John Child is so far from answering the *Rebuke_s* design, that on the contrary it rather stands as a warning, that no man should desert our communion, and afterwards revile us?_ *

(* The awful case of this miserable man is given in our second volume, p. 605-607. He had been a minister and member of the church of Bedford, in Mr. Gifford_s time, with Mr. Bunyan. He conformed to the Church of England after the restoration, through fear of fines and imprisonment. He published a work, reviling the Baptist ministers, his former brethren, who were suffering for conscience sake. And, in 1684, he laid violent hands upon himself. His book was answered, among others, by the famous Thomas Delaune, a Baptist schoolmaster, author of the celebrated work on Nonconformity. This tract is very scarce, and of great merit. It is entitled, _An answer to Mr. John Child_s Paper, called, _A second Argument for a more full and firm Union among all

good Protestants; wherein the Nonconformists taking the Sacrament after the manner of the Church of England is justified, &c. in a *Letter to a Friend*: now again made public, as an Antidote against that fatal Paper: by Thomas Delaune. 1683.)

If, instead of using *rebukes*, the answerer had *proved* that infant sprinkling was Christian baptism, enjoined by Christ, and practised by the apostles, he would most effectually have silenced this argument of the Baptists; by virtue of which, they (with Dr. Gill) consider it as a *part and pillar of Popery*, because it has no other support than *tradition*,—the sandy foundation on which the Church of Rome is professedly built.

1735: No Scripture for Infant Baptism.
Sentiments of a modern Roman Catholic.

Before I close this section of our history, I will present the reader with the opinion of a modern sensible Roman Catholic writer upon the subject of infant baptism_s having no support from the Scriptures. _Where,_ says the writer, _did the Church of England learn this doctrine? Certainly not from the Scriptures; for it is not recorded in the Scriptures; it could only be from tradition._ *

(* The writer referred to is the Rev. John Lidgard, who, about seven years ago, published *Strictures on Dr. Marsh_s* (the present Bishop of Peterborough) *Comparative View of the Churches of England and Rome*. Dr. Marsh had contended that the Church of England was founded upon the Scriptures alone, but that the Church of Rome admitted *traditions* also. To this Mr. Lidgard replies, _that there is no other foundation for infant baptism than *tradition*, on which the Church of Rome founds the practice; and that the Church of England, in rejecting the authority of *tradition*, has no proper ground for baptizing infants._ Mr. Lidgard says, _The Church of England teaches the validity of infant baptism, because she speaks of those who receive baptism rightly!_ he then asks, _But where did she learn this doctrine? Certainly not from the Scriptures; for it is not recorded in the Scriptures; it could only be from tradition._ Dr. Marsh, it seems, had observed, _But our twenty-seventh article is so far from resting the practice of infant baptism on the authority of *tradition*, that it places the practice on a totally different footing. *The baptism of young children*, says the article, *is in any wise to be retained in the church as most agreeable to the institution of Christ*._ To this Mr. Lidgard answers, _This ought not to excite our surprise. It would indeed have been a most extraordinary oversight in the founders of the modern Church of England, if, after they had rejected tradition in their sixth article, they had retained it in their twenty-seventh. But men do not always act up to their professions. It may at times be convenient to say one thing and do another. *They had agreed to retain infant baptism: it was, therefore, necessary to rest it upon some ground*. ON SCRIPTURE THEY COULD NOT; FOR IT IS NOT TAUGHT IN SCRIPTURE. The best expedient that remained, was to rest it on its agreement with the institution of Christ. But what is meant by this *agreement*? I regret that Dr. Marsh thought it foreign from his subject to explain it: to me, such an explanation seems absolutely necessary. Does it mean that Christ really instituted baptism? Then they must have learned it from *tradition*. Does it mean that, after considering the subject attentively, they think it most probable that

infants were baptized? Then they acknowledge *that a very important part of the doctrine of Christ is left unrecorded in the Scripture.*—Strictures upon Dr. Marsh's Comparative View, &c. p. 54. Sold by Booker, 61, Bondstreet, London.)

1736: Dissenters present an Address.

The year 1736 witnessed the celebration of the marriage of his Royal Highness Fredrick Prince of Wales, and the Princess Augusta of Saxa-Gotha, the royal parents of his late Majesty George III, The protestant Dissenting Ministers of the Three Denominations in London and Westminster presented an Address of congratulation to his Majesty on the happy occasion. The deputation consisted of three Presbyterians, two Independents, and two Baptists, in addition to the chairman, Mr. Samuel Wilson, by whom the Address was presented to the King. This Address I have not been able to procure.

1736: Dr. James Foster's Lectures.

The spirit of infidelity, which prevailed at this period, had prepared the minds of people, who were desirous of avoiding the imputation of having renounced Christianity, for giving a hearty welcome to the dogmas of Socinian preachers on the specious topics of natural religion and social virtue; and it required only a minister of popular talents, who could declaim with a *pleasant voice*, and in an eloquent style, as one who *played well on an instrument*, to collect together a large congregation of *rational* Christians. Such a preacher was found in the person of Mr. (afterwards Dr.) James Foster, one of the ministers of the Baptist church in Paul's Alley. In 1728 he engaged in a Lord's-day evening lecture at the Old Jewry, which he carried on for more than twenty years, with a degree of popularity which is said to have been unexampled among protestant Dissenters. The following description of this congregation, drawn by the pen of Dr. Fleming, successor to Dr. Foster, will give the reader a just idea of the sentiments, spirit and tendency of these celebrated lectures:— *Here was a confluence of persons of every rank, station, and quality; wits, free-thinkers, numbers of the clergy; who, whilst they gratified their curiosity, had their prepossessions shaken, and their prejudices loosened. And of the usefulness and success of these lectures, he (Dr. Foster) had a large number of written testimonials from unknown, as well as from known persons.* *

(* It has been thought likely that curiosity drew the celebrated Mr. Pope to become one of his occasional hearers. This conjecture receives some degree of confirmation from what Dr. Fleming says, *Wits and free thinkers were among them.* In the epilogue to his Satires, Pope has taken occasion to notice Dr. Foster thus:

*Let modest Foster, if he will, excel
Ten metropolitans in preaching well.*

Bishop Warburton, whose pride was stung by such a reflection upon the clergy, has the following sarcastic and jure divino remark: *This confirms an observation which Mr. Hobbes (the atheist) made long ago, that there be very few bishops that act a sermon so well as divers Presbyterians and fanatics do.*)

Dr. Fleming has not informed us what ideas he meant to convey by the *usefulness* and *success* of these lectures. It was probably of the same kind with the usefulness of the late Dr. Priestly, who boasted that but for his conciliatory scheme, Mr. Robinson of Cambridge would have gone into infidelity. It is not likely *free-thinkers* were *converted* to Christianity by such sermons as were gratifying to *wits!* There is an

essential difference between _men_s prepossessions being shaken and their prejudices loosened, _ and their being turned from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God,—the grand ends to be effected by the ministry of the gospel. But perhaps Dr. Fleming only meant to intimate, that many of Dr. Foster_s hearers, who had already reached the gates of Socinianism at the head of the way, but for his having lectured on natural religion, social virtue, the eternal fitness of things, &c. would have passed through it, and, by following the high road, would not have stopped in their career till they had reached the dark and dreary mansion of infidelity, by giving up even a professed respect for Christianity.

1738: Calvinistic Baptists oppose Dr. Foster.

It is gratifying to find, while one Baptist minister was thus administering moral poison, that others of our ministers were employed in furnishing the antidote to counteract its dreadful operation, and its destructive tendency.

1738: Sentiments of Mr. Joseph Stennett.

Mr. John Brine wrote in the most powerful and evangelical manner; and Mr. Samuel Wilson, and Mr. (afterwards Dr.) Joseph Stennett, employed their powerful and commanding talents in preaching the doctrines of grace, the doctrines according to godliness. From the _Dedication_ prefixed to a sermon published in 1738 by the last of these ministers, the following extract is made:— _The amazing progress which infidelity is daily making, cannot but deeply afflict the heart of every serious person: nor is it difficult to retrace the steps by which this dreadful apostasy so swiftly advances, and by whose assistance it is that it has been chiefly promoted. I shall only observe, that the Deists would never have laboured the subversion of Christianity, as they have done, had the design of it been no more than to reform the morals of mankind. But the account it gives of the trinity of persons in the undivided essence of God, is a deep mystery, and not to be scanned by human reason; the representation it sets before them of the sinfulness and misery into which human nature is sunk by the fall, *stains the pride of their glory*; salvation by the blood and righteousness of the incarnate Son of God, is to them *foolishness*; and the work of the Spirit, in changing and sanctifying the hearts of men, together with the faith and holiness which they evidently see the gospel requires, are doctrines so disagreeable to flesh and blood, that they can by no means receive them; and therefore they reject revelation itself, notwithstanding all the evidence that supports it. This has always been the case; and it were to be wished, that these unhappy men might see their danger before it be too late. But surely it must be a most weak and base expedient to attempt to bring them back to Christianity at the expense of the fundamental articles of it, and by reducing the gospel of Christ Jesus to only a few lectures on morality. This you know has been the modern way. And what has the success of it been? If, indeed, by this method, infidels were convinced and reclaimed, the wavering were established, and the hearts and lives of men were made better, these fashionable teachers would have something to say. But, instead of this, we daily see, that when many of their followers come to be persuaded that there is no more in Christianity than a refinement upon the morality of the heathens, they think it hardly worth pursuing, and so declare for infidelity. We see also that practical iniquity keeps pace with these corruptions; and infidels themselves, instead of being convicted by such absurd reasonings, or won over by such mean and scandalous concessions, smile at the folly of those that offer them, and

wonder that they should be fond of the name of Christians, while they are every day doing more harm to Christianity than to themselves.

_These are the blessed effects of our new divinity; and though many honest and good men could hardly be prevailed upon some time ago to believe, that those who begun the popular cry against schemes in religion, intended to strike against the system of doctrine contained in the Scriptures; that they exposed all creeds and confessions of faith, in order to run down the faith itself; or that they ridiculed catechisms, with an intent to hinder the rising generation from being acquainted, if possible, with the doctrines of the gospel; yet time, I think, has put all this out of question.

_The consideration of these things affords a melancholy prospect to all the true friends of religion; and nothing could support their hopes in such a day as this, were they not assured, from past experience, that the gospel of salvation, with every doctrine it contains, has withstood all sorts of opposition, and that the promise of eternal truth has secured its continuance to the end of time. But still we are to consider, that this may be made good in other parts of the world, though as a just punishment for the abuse of the light we have enjoyed, the gospel should be removed from our ungrateful land, and our posterity should become as blind and barbarous as our wretched ancestors were before they received it. The great and general decay of vital and experimental godliness, which good men observe in others, and feel in their own hearts, is a most threatening symptom of the approach of such a dreadful dispensation.

1738: Baneful tendency of Socinianism.

_Can *they* have done any service to the cause of revelation, who have complimented the enemies of it by delivering up any of its peculiar doctrines; doctrines which were constantly taught by Christ and his apostles through the whole course of their ministry; doctrines which depend not upon a few obscure passages of holy writ, but which have the current of the Scriptures on their side; doctrines which were diligently preached by the primitive fathers of the church, in the purest ages of it,—which have overcome all sorts of opposition in after times,—and which have been sealed with the blood of so many martyrs? We should remember that our brave forefathers laid these principles as the basis of the reformation from Popery.—Let us look but one age back, when these doctrines were generally received in these kingdoms; and what a holy and heavenly spirit breathed in the sermons, in the writings, and in the lives of the eminent men of those times! what success attended their public labours, in the conversion of sinners and the edification of the saints! and how did the conversation of professors recommend their principles! The common reproach that is cast upon the doctrines of grace is, that they tend to licentiousness: and the fashionable teachers of our time tell us, that their scheme is strictly calculated to promote good works. But surely it will be in fact acknowledged; when a just comparison is drawn between the lives of professors in the last age and of those in this, that this change of principles has been far from being attended with an improvement in practical religion, the adversaries of these glorious truths themselves being judges, _ *

(* _The Christian Strife for the Faith of the Gospel; a Sermon preached at the Rev. Mr. Hill's Meeting-place, in Thames-street, February 9, 1738, before a Society of Ministers and Gentlemen engaged in a Design for the Encouragement of Young Men in their Studies for the Ministry, whose Hearts God has inclined to that sacred Work. Published, with some Enlargements, by Joseph Stennett.

London, printed for Aaron Ward, &c. The writer conjectures that this was the Independent Academy under the care of Abraham Taylor, D. D. of Deptford. If so, it affords evidence of the good understanding that prevailed between Independent and Baptist ministers at that period. Mr. Stennett's sermon, which extends to eighty-four octavo pages, besides twelve pages of dedication, is a masterly defence of evangelical truth. Had it been published in the form of an essay, it would probably have been better known, and more extensively read.)

Thus powerfully, by an appeal to facts as well as to the Scriptures, did this eloquent preacher contend for *the faith once delivered to the saints*, in opposition to those, who were speciously and artfully employed in *spoiling men through philosophy and vain deceit, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ*.

1738: Anecdote of Rev. Dr. Watts.

This may be the suitable place to introduce the name of the learned and pious Dr. Watts, (the sweet singer of the British Israel,) who wrote with more candour respecting the Baptist sentiments than any who had preceded him among the Independents or Presbyterians. It appears that this very great man had entertained a serious intention of attempting to unite the Baptists and Independents into one body, seeing there were no differences between them, either as to doctrine or discipline, excepting the one point of Christian baptism.

The knowledge of this having been the mind of this good and catholic minister of Jesus Christ, was brought to light by the following circumstance. In the year 1782 several pamphlets were published on the Baptist controversy by the Rev. John Carter, of Matishall, in Norfolk, and the late Rev. William Richards, of Lynn. At the close of one of his pamphlets, Mr. Richards had asserted, in reference to *sprinkling* not being the proper mode of baptism, that *Dr. Watts told his friend Mr. G. (Mr. afterwards Dr. Gibbons,) that he wished infant baptism was laid aside.*

1738: Letter of Dr. Gibbons.

Whether Mr. Richards was fully justified in making so broad an assertion, will be judged of by the following extract of a letter, written by Dr. Gibbons to Mr. Carter, in consequence of it, dated London, June 22, 1782.

Reverend Sir,

I find it has been asserted, in a publication, that *Dr. Watts* declared to me, for I am said to be the person referred to, though only the initial letter of my name, and not my name at length, is printed,) that he *wished infant baptism was laid aside*. It is not a little disagreeable to me, that what I mentioned casually in conversation, without the least apprehension I should hear of it again in the public manner I have done, should have come into the press, and thence communicated to the world. But as this has been the case, it may not be improper, nay it may have become necessary, for me to give a plain account of the matter, which I shall do with the strictest regard to truth, and without the least tincture of partiality.

The Doctor and myself were one day, perhaps two or three years before his decease, in a free converse together, when (I cannot recollect how the subject was introduced) he expressed himself to this purpose, *That he had sometimes thought of a compromise with our Baptist brethren, by their giving up their mode of baptism, immersion on the one side, and our giving up baptism of infants on the other as he had not observed any benefit arising from the administration of the ordinance to them.* This was the whole, from what

I remember, the Doctor said upon the point; which, in my opinion, falls much short of a declaration from him, that *he wished infant baptism to be laid aside.*_ *

(* *The Monthly and Literary Journal*, from January to June inclusive, 1784, by several hands. Vol. lxx. p. 398.)

1738: Dr. Watt's Sentiments of Baptism.

The fact, however, is clear and indisputable, that Dr. Watts would have proposed to concede the point of the baptism of *infants*, had there been any probability that the Baptists would have conceded that of *immersion*, that is to say, would have agreed, that in future all persons in their churches should be sprinkled, if the Independents would agree, that none among them, except professed believers, should be baptized. This suggestion from so eminent a man, serves to prove, that there was a conviction in his mind, that there was no necessity that any except believers should be baptized; and shews, that whatever views he might have of the divine authority for infant sprinkling, they had but a slight hold upon his mind, as _he had never observed any benefit to arise from the administration of baptism to them;_ and that he had sometimes thought of proposing, as the condition of a compromise with his Baptist brethren, _the giving up of the baptism of infants._ On the other hand, it is indeed wonderful, that Dr. Watts should not have known the Baptists better than ever to imagine it possible that they would consent to _give up their mode of baptism,_ for the sake of accomplishing any object whatever, even though that should be the apparent union of two bodies composed of sincere, evangelical, and congregational protestant Dissenters. He might certainly have known from their writings, that they consider immersion not as a *mode* of baptism, more proper than some other mode, but as *the thing* itself; and that they maintain, that baptism is a religious immersion of the body in water,—and that such an immersion, performed according to the commission and example of Christ, and the practice of the apostles, is the only Christian baptism. *

(* That Dr. Watts was not very zealous for *sprinkling*, as the mode of baptism, appears from the following quotation from his sermon on _Christian Baptism._—
_The Greek word, _baptizo,_ signifies to _wash_ any thing properly by water coming over it._ After mentioning what _learned men had argued_ in proof of this assertion, he adds, _But this shall suffice for a hint of this controversy, which has filled large volumes in the world, made a huge noise in the church, and destroyed the charity of a multitude of Christians. Since I do not here profess to enter into the argument, but only to give a few short notices or rehearsals of what is said in our vindication, who practise the baptism of infants by sprinkling water on them, I do the rather ask leave to speak one charitable word on this subject, viz. that since this controversy has considerable difficulties attending it, persons of an honest and sincere soul, in searching out the truth, may happen to run into different opinions: and the things in which we agree are so important, as should not suffer us to quarrel about the lesser things wherein we differ. Our brethren who reject infant baptism, as well as we who practise it, all agree in a belief of the sacred institution of this ordinance, and in a reverence for it; we all agree that the children should be devoted to God, and should be partakers of all the utmost privileges into which the Scripture admits them, and that they should grow up under all possible obligations to duty; and since each of us desires to find out the will of Christ, and to practise

accordingly, it is a most unreasonable thing we should be angry with each other._

Nor does Dr. Watts appear in his writings remarkably tenacious for *infants* being the proper *subjects* of baptism. He asks, *_Who are the subjects of this ordinance of baptism, or to whom is it to be administered?_* To this he replies, *_The first, THE MOST PROPER, or at least the most evident subjects of it, are persons who confess their sins, and profess to repent of them, and who accept of the grace and salvation offered in the gospel; those who have been taught the chief doctrines and duties of the gospel of Christ, and profess to believe and receive them, and to comply with them; those who take upon them the religion of Christ, become his disciples, and give up their names to him. There is no difference, whether Greek or Jew, whether male or female, as there was in the Jewish ceremony of circumcision, which belonged properly to the Jewish nation, and admitted none but males; but all professors of the gospel must receive this ceremony, and be baptized in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost: and this is the most common account the New Testament gives us of this matter, THAT WHEN PERSONS PROFESSED THEIR FAITH IN CHRIST, THEY WERE BAPTIZED. TEXTS OF THIS KIND NEED NOT BE QUOTED, THY ARE SO NUMEROUS._*

Had the Doctor closed with this paragraph none could have imagined him to be a Paedobaptist, and in the practice of *sprinkling infants*; but he adds, *_But in the Christian church, from its early ages, and we think from the Apostles_ time, it hath been the custom also to baptize the infant children of professed Christians; and though there be NO such express and plain commands or examples of it written in the Scriptures as we might have expected, yet there are several inferences to be drawn from what is written, which afford a just and reasonable encouragement of this practice, and guard it from the censure of superstition and will-worship. This has been a long and troublesome dispute indeed among the churches since the Reformation. I shall not pretend to debate it here,_ &c.* The reader is to judge which paragraph is most consonant to the meaning of Scripture, and the spirit of genuine *protestantism* and consistent *dissenterism*. In the mean while, it is probable that the Baptists will continue to take the safe side, and baptize those *only* whom this highly respected advocate for infant-sprinkling considered as *_the first, the most proper, and the most evident subjects of it._*)

1738: Dr. Benjamin Grosvenor's Case.

If the Baptists had not decidedly and universally held these sentiments, we should probably before this have heard of some one among their ministers, for the sake of peace, and for the manifestation of Christian charity, having given up the immersion of adult believers, and having practised *sprinkling* in its stead. But such an instance there has never been, nor is it likely that there ever will be. It is true there have been a few young ministers, who (like the eminent Dr. Benjamin Grosvenor of this period) have deserted our standard; *

1738: After having been baptized by Mr. Keach, becomes a Presbyterian.

(* This circumstance in the life of Dr. Benjamin Grosvenor, Mr. Wilson says, vol. i. p. 346, *_has been passed over by his biographer._* And yet, as it appears

he attended to baptism with _uncommon seriousness of disposition,_ even those who considered he had acted unwisely, need not have thought it an act of such juvenile indiscretion as to be a blot upon his memory. The most probable supposition is, that the Doctor did not make it known to his friends; and that, although Crosby_s History of the Baptists, published in 1740, contained the fact, they had not come to the knowledge of it. The circumstances (as stated by Mr. Crosby) are, that about the year 1689, Mr. Benjamin Grosvenor, then a youth of fourteen, was baptized by Mr. Benjamin Keach, and became a member of the church in Goat-street, Horselydown. This he continued to be about seven or eight years. Having a desire for the ministry, he was encouraged to exercise his gifts, and preached privately several times at the house of Mr. Keach, before him and other members of the church. As Mr. Keach and his friends found Mr. Grosvenor to be a youth of very promising abilities, they encouraged his parents to obtain for him literary instructions, that he might be the better fitted for the work of the ministry. They accordingly sent him to the Presbyterian academy at Attercliff in Yorkshire, kept by the celebrated Mr. Timothy Jollie. Soon after his return from the academy, when he was about twenty-two years of age, he told some of the members of the church, that it was his opinion that *infants* ought to be *baptized*; that the *government* of the church ought to be in the *eldership*, and not in the *members*; and that *unordained* persons, that is to say, those who had not received *Presbyterian* ordination, ought not to preach. _These things,_ says Mr. Crosby, who was one of the members, _moved the church to deal plainly with him: they recommended to him his reading impartially Mr. Toombe_s *Examen*; and appointed proper persons to discourse these points with him. After much time spent between the church and him in *controversy* without any effect, he desired a dismissal; but not being determined where to fix himself, they were necessarily obliged to grant his request, and did dismiss him in a general manner from his membership with them._

Mr. Wilson, who in general writes with great correctness and candour, seems to have lost himself upon this occasion. He says in a note, vol.ii. p. 347, _From Crosby_s account the reader will necessarily conclude that Mr. Grosvenor received a peaceable dismissal. The contrary, however, was the fact, and it afterwards operated to his injury. Most of the ministers of that period, at least of the Independent and Presbyterian denominations, considered him to have been treated with harshness and injustice._ But it appears really astonishing that these *Paedobaptist* ministers should consider the treatment to be _harsh and unjust_, when Mr. Grosvenor had embraced *Paedobaptism* and *Presbyterianism*, that the church in Goat-street should grant him a dismissal, even though he had not fixed upon union with any other Dissenting church. Mr. Wilson has furnished no *proof*, either that Crosby_s account is unworthy of credit, or that Mr. Grosvenor was injured by the Baptist church, which had treated him with so much kindness, and even tenderness, and which granted him a dismissal from this community as soon as he had signified his wish to leave them.

Dr. Grosvenor was a minister in London, of the Presbyterian denomination, for upwards of fifty years. He died August 27, 1758, in the 83d year of his age. He was one of the ministers who bare the pall at the funeral of Dr. Watts in 1748.

One of his friends, on that occasion, thus accosted him,— _Well, Dr. Grosvenor, you have seen the end of Dr. Watts, and you will soon follow—what think you of death?_ _Think of it?_ replied he; _why, when death comes, I shall smile upon death, if God smiles upon me._)

But then, renouncing altogether the sentiment, that professed believers are the only proper subjects of baptism, they have given up their principles respecting both the mode and the subject. These observations are only made to show the impracticability of the scheme meditated by Dr. Watts for bringing about such a comprehension. However desirable UNION may be in the church, especially among those who _hold the head, even Christ,_ yet, unless it can be obtained without either party giving up what they consider *a rite of divine authority*, they must be content to entertain and cherish for each other the most sincere brotherly love and affection, whilst they unite only in those things which are common to them as evangelical Christians, or as members of civil and political society, and which will not require the sacrifice of truth and conscience. To such a union as this the Baptists have never manifested any reluctance; nor can an instance be produced of their having in any place, even where they have been the most numerous and powerful sect, despised or persecuted those Christians who have differed from them.

1742: Case of Occasional Conformity.

The reader is now come to another subject of vital importance to the purity and reputation of Dissenting churches,—that of receiving the Lord's Supper in the Church of England as a qualification for civil offices. There had been no instance of _occasional conformity_ in any of the London particular Baptist churches till the year 1742. At the beginning of that year a Mr. Baskerville was elected to the office of common-council man for the city of London, and had qualified himself for that office by receiving the sacrament according to the rites of the Church of England. The church of which he was a member proceeded to censure him, but in private, for his conduct. He pleaded the rights of conscience, and said that his only reason was that he might be useful in life, and of service to the Dissenting interest. He complained of the interference of the church, as destructive to the right of private judgment, and intimated his intention, after being elected a second time to the office, of receiving his qualification by again taking the sacrament. Mr. Baskerville had also said, that he should have asked his dismissal from the church, but that he thought _the other churches that were Baptists and Calvinists would not receive him, when he should inform them, as in conscience he must, with his reason and design in leaving his former communion._

1742: Opinion of the London Churches.

The church in Unicorn Yard, whose pastor was Mr. Thomas Flower, proceeded with much tenderness, but with great firmness, and regard for the purity of religion; and in order to obtain for Mr. Baskerville all the authority they were able in confirmation of the correctness of their opinion, they resolved to request the Board of Ministers, and the churches which they represented, to favour them with their opinion upon the following question, viz. _Whether a person ought to be continued in the fellowship of the church, who shall have received the sacrament in the Church of England to qualify himself for executing an office of trust or profit, when at the same time he does not incur any penalty if he refuses to accept the place?_

This question being submitted to the ministers at the Coffeehouse, January 4, 1742-3, fourteen ministers agreed unanimously, _that it is absolutely unlawful for any member of

a gospel church to communicate with the Church of England on any consideration whatever._ They agreed also to request the churches to send two deputies with their minister to the meeting-house in Great East-cheap, on January 11, at 3 o'clock. The ministers carried the question and request to their respective churches; and they all concurred in the opinion I find recorded in the church-book of Little Wild-street, _That such person ought not to be continued in the fellowship of the church._ The ministers and deputies from each of the particular churches, whose pastors were associated at the Coffee-house, met at the time appointed, and agreed upon the following sensible and characteristic letter. The chairman, Mr. Samuel Wilson, was directed to sign it, and to send it to the church at Unicorn-yard.

1742: Opinion of the Ministers.

FROM THE MINISTERS AND DEPUTIES.

_Dearly beloved in the Lord,

_You will receive by your messengers a copy of our proceedings with relation to the people meeting in White-street, *and also the sense of all the churches, in answer to the question which was laid before us relating to the lawfulness of continuing communion with persons, who, for the sake of places of profit or honour, occasionally conform to the Church of England.* As it has been matter of great grief to us, and we are persuaded to you also, that there should be such a cause as this given to any one of our communities to seek advice, so it is no small consolation to us, to find that the churches are so well united in their judgment on this occasion. We hope this happy unanimity will have its weight with the congregation most immediately concerned; and that they will faithfully discharge their duty in this matter. And we heartily wish it may have the most desirable effect on the mind and conduct of the brother who has given the offence, that so he may be humbled and reclaimed, and delivered out of the snare which is laid for his soul.

_Such has been the influence this sad affair has had upon our minds, and such we hope we can truly say is our jealousy for the glory of God, the purity of our holy profession, and the welfare of the churches to which we stand related, as well as the bad effect we apprehend our example in this city might have on our sister churches throughout the kingdom, should so dangerous an evil obtain the least footing amongst us, that we have thought it incumbent on us, as the ministers of Jesus Christ, and your representatives, in the fear of God, and in the love we bear to the interest of the dear Redeemer and your precious souls, to offer you a few words of advice on this important occasion.

_And we would put you in mind, Christian brethren, that how few soever our churches are in number, and however contemptible they appear in the eyes of the world, it has been their distinguishing mercy to be founded on the true scriptural plan. Without taking any glory to ourselves, but ascribing it all where it is justly due, we may be bold to claim the purest character in this respecting the whole world. And in the midst of all declensions and corruptions which we have so much reason to mourn over, blessed be God, *we have hitherto been preserved from such a defection as this*, while we have seen, with great grief, the indulgence and growth of it among some others of our Dissenting brethren, though we know it has been also greatly bewailed by the most serious among them.

1742: Reasons against Occasional Conformity.

_The separation of our forefathers from the national establishment was founded upon principle. They could not, they durst not, submit to any religious constitution, but what was strictly regulated by the word of God; nor receive as the rule of their faith, their

worship, or their discipline, what appeared to them to derive its origin only from the inventions and decisions of fallible men. They knew very well, that even a pin in the sanctuary that was not of divine appointment, would have been a high offence against heaven; and they had found, that so innocent a ceremony in itself as that of washing the hands before eating, when enjoined as a religious duty by mere human authority, though the greatest upon earth, was condemned by Christ, as an invasion of the rights of conscience, and, which is still more dangerous, of the prerogatives of God himself; and therefore they could not hesitate one moment in their refusal of communion with a church, the very frame of which is contrary to the appointment of our great Lord and his apostles,—a church that owes its constitution, its officers, its discipline, and many of its modes of worship, merely to human policy and power;—a church that assumes to itself an arbitrary right of imposing its prescriptions on the consciences of men;—in a word, a church that has almost universally departed from many of those articles of its own faith, which are agreeable with Scripture, and of very great importance to Christianity, and that indulges in its bosom multitudes of people of the most corrupt principles, and the most immoral and profligate lives.

For this laudable separation, our forefathers, with great Christian patience and courage, suffered the most grievous reproaches on their character, the spoiling of their goods, and the imprisonment of their persons; and not a few of them sealed their faithful testimony with their blood. If we, therefore, brethren, in such a day of liberty as this, should, for the sake of the emoluments of this world, or out of a mistaken charity, give up this glorious cause, or indulge any in our communion that do so, or that submit to a wicked prostitution of the holy Supper, which was instituted by our dear Redeemer as the memorial of his dying love, to the purposes of worldly honour or lucrative employments, surely we should be unworthy of the character of the descendants of such ancestors; our profession would be exposed to the ridicule of the profane; we should be justly esteemed hypocrites by the very men that impose this ordinance as a civil test upon us; and, after we have been so often mourning over this scandalous prostitution as the sin of our legislature, and the apostasy of too many of our Dissenting brethren who have basely submitted to it, we should ourselves become most sad partakers of their iniquities, and, it is to be feared, draw down the righteous indignation of heaven upon our communities. For happy is he who condemneth not himself in that thing which he abhorreth; and the God whom we worship, as he cannot be deceived, so he will not be mocked.

_Brethren, we hope better things than these of you all; but we conclude you will not think this caution to be unseasonable at this time: and we beseech you, in the bowels of our dear Lord, as you tender the honour of his name, the presence of his Spirit, the prosperity of your community, the love of your brethren, and the welfare and comfort of your own souls, that you will carefully watch against all corruption in doctrine and in practice in these sad times; and in a special manner, lest, at any time, this root of bitterness springing up among you, many be defiled; and that you will put it away from you wherever it is found. And thus commending you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able not only to keep you from falling, but to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among them that are sanctified, we remain,

Your brethren in the faith and order of the gospel,

SAMUEL WILSON, Chairman.

January 14, 1742-3

1742: Purity of Discipline.

Neither the reasoning of this admirable epistle, nor the unanimous sentiment of reprobation expressed by the churches, was sufficient to convince Mr. Baskerville of the impropriety and profanity of making the symbols of the dying love of the Saviour _the stepping-stone to office, and the picklock of a place._ The church, however, knew its duty, and manifested their allegiance to the King of Zion by putting away from among them this wicked person. _On Aug. 22, 1743, the messengers who had been appointed to converse with Mr. Baskerville reported, that he had again, by taking the sacrament in the Church of England, qualified himself for the office of common-council man: it was therefore agreed, that, as he had by so doing profaned the sacred ordinance of the Lord's Supper, and acted contrary to the admonition of the church, they do now adjudge him to be no longer a member of this church._ It appears, notwithstanding, that he continued still of the congregation, as he was several times after this appointed one of the deputies for defending their civil rights.

The Particular Baptist Churches in London have always been preserved from this disgraceful compromise of their principles as Dissenters and Christians, for the purpose of their members being invested with civic honours. A very few instances have occurred since of the same practice; but the writer believes they have always been immediately discountenanced by the ministers and churches, so that the discipline of the churches has either purged them from the contamination, or restored the offender to his right mind. He wishes he could say as much of some others of the Baptist churches situated in corporations,—some of which, by sanctioning, or winking at, such conduct, have brought more disgrace upon themselves than ever they have received of honour and advantage from the Sheriff's ermine, or the Mayor's golden chain of office. *

(* The writer records it to the honour of one of the western churches, (the church at Lyme,) that in 1778 they excluded a member instantly, who had qualified himself for the office of free-burgess by taking the sacrament in the Church of England;—an example this, worthy the imitation of their neighbours, and of the whole body of protestant Dissenters.)

1743: Battle of Dettingen.

The events of this year afforded to the friends of the Royal House cause for rejoicing, and for manifesting their gratitude for the protection which God had mercifully granted to their lawful Sovereign. One of the events alluded to was the famous battle of Dettingen, where the King of England commanded in person the confederate forces. The 17th of July, 1743, _being appointed by their Excellencies the Lords Justices for returning thanks to Almighty God for the late glorious victory obtained by his Majesty at Dettingen,_ Mr. Joseph Stennett, that loyal patriot minister, seized the opportunity of preaching on the occasion at Little Wild-street. This sermon was published at the request of the congregation, and soon reached a second edition. It is not necessary for me to copy the judicious statement made of the circumstances which induced the King to enter into the war; but the object was to check the French Monarch in his scheme of obtaining the supreme dominion in Europe, and to chastise his violation of the most solemn engagements in attacking the House of Austria. The French army was very superior to the English, both as to numbers and discipline: it was under the command of the Marshal de Noailles, a most experienced officer, and had every advantage of position and attack, of

magazines and artillery. And yet God gave a signal victory to the King of England, making bare his arm in his protection, and in the triumph which was achieved on that memorable day.

This eloquent preacher thus concludes:— _May we never cease to pray for the safety and true glory of our King, and for every divine blessing on his sacred person, and on all his royal posterity! May we *study the things that make for the public peace* and welfare; and if there be any *strange children* *

(* Referring to the text on which the discourse was founded, Ps. cxliv, 9–11.)

left among us, who have forgotten their vows in the days of their distress; and when French counsels prevailed in this nation, may God open their eyes, and humble them more for their great sin and folly! I hope none such are to be found among the *protestant Dissenters*; and I am glad I have this opportunity to say, that it has administered no small pleasure to a large assembly of them in this city, to reflect, that they, with the assistance of several of their ministers, were warmly wrestling with Heaven for the salvation we now celebrate, at the very hour when the battle began._

1744: Address to the King.

The general body of Protestant Dissenting Ministers presented an Address of congratulation to the King on his return after this memorable campaign.

The following Address of the Protestant Dissenting Ministers in and about the cities of London and Westminster, was presented to the King, Jan. 4, 1744, by the Rev. Obadiah Hughes, D. D. attended by several of his brethren:—

_May it please your Majesty,

_We humbly beg leave to congratulate your Majesty upon the happy concurrence of many favourable providences which have lately attended your royal person and family, in whose prosperity we are greatly interested, and feel a most sensible pleasure.

_Your Majesty's safe return to these your British dominions rejoices the hearts of all your good subjects. This joy is much increased by reflecting on the extreme dangers to which, in defence of the liberties of Europe, you generously exposed your life in the fields of Dettingen, and acquired immortal honour; where, under the influence of Heaven, and animated by your presence and valour, the confederate army gained an important victory over the common enemy.

_This, with the recovery of the Duke from the honourable wound he received in the battle, the marriage of the Princess Louisa with the Prince Royal of Denmark, and the birth of another son to his Royal Highness the Prince of Wales, is such a series of events as greatly encourages our hopes, that the goodness of God will perpetuate the blessings which we persuade ourselves his providence designed in placing your Majesty's family upon the throne of these kingdoms, under which we have enjoyed so many years of peace and prosperity.

We gladly embrace the opportunity to assure your Majesty, that we are deeply sensible of our share in the public happiness under your auspicious government; and that we shall, from principles both of gratitude and of conscience, continue our endeavors to impress the minds of those to whom we minister, with such sentiments, as shall tend to confirm them in loyalty and affection to so excellent a Prince.

_Nor shall we cease to offer up our most fervent prayers to the King of kings, that wisdom from above may always direct your Majesty's counsels, and such further success attend your arms, as may produce that lasting security of the liberties of Europe, and

those blessings to these kingdoms, which your Majesty has in view; that your Majesty's most precious life may continue to be the special care of the Almighty, who covered your head in the day of battle; that, after a long and prosperous reign, you may inherit a crown of immortality in the world to come; and that there never may be wanting a successor to your royal line, who, after your Majesty's great example, shall be the guardian of the liberties of these kingdoms till time shall be no more._

1744: Answer of the King.

To which his Majesty was pleased to return the following most gracious answer:—

I THANK YOU FOR THIS DUTIFUL ADDRESS. YOU MAY DEPEND UPON THE CONTINUANCE OF MY PROTECTION. *

(* *Gentleman's Magazine*, vol. iv, p. 48.)

1744: Loyalty of the Dissenters.

In the month of March the general Body presented an address of loyal attachment on account of his Majesty having heard of a design on the part of the French to invade these kingdoms.

The following address of the protestant Dissenting Ministers in and about the cities of London and Westminster, was presented to his Majesty by the Rev. John Guyse, D. D. attended by several of his brethren.

_Most gracious Sovereign,

_We humbly beg leave, on this important occasion, to renew the solemn assurances we lately gave your Majesty of our unalterable attachment to your sacred person and government.

_It is with great surprise to us, that an insolent and perfidious nation, in revenge for the repulse they have met with from your Majesty's arms abroad, should form the design of invading you at home, in favour of an outlawed popish Pretender. But that any of those who live under your Majesty's just and mild government should be so infatuated and abandoned as to give them any encouragement, raises our indignation and astonishment.

_Your Majesty's known wisdom and valour; the noble ardour and firmness of both your Houses of Parliament; the cheerful concurrence of your faithful subjects of all ranks and orders, in declaring their inviolable fidelity to your Majesty; the tried courage of your forces; and your Majesty's seasonable call on your people to fasting and prayer;—as they justly encourage our hopes of your long and prosperous reign, so they may well damp all expectations of success in the most inveterate and sanguine of your enemies.

_Our detestation of Popery, and of that arbitrary power which would naturally attend it, were it ever to be introduced among us, and our apprehensions of danger from both, are not at all abated by any such pretended coalition of parties, as has left among us no enemies to your Majesty and our happy constitution. We therefore think it our duty and interest to do our utmost (even at the hazard of our all in this world) for the safety of your royal person and government, with which our civil and religious rights are inseparably connected.

And we crave leave to assure your Majesty, that while we endeavour to cultivate such sentiments in those under our care, and to warm their breasts with zeal for your Majesty, and affection to your illustrious family, we will not fail to offer up our most ardent prayers to God, that he would direct your Majesty's counsels, prosper your arms, and defeat the designs of all your enemies, in so remarkable a manner, as may convince the

whole world, that your sacred person, your royal family, and our dear country, are the objects of the special favour and constant protection of Divine Providence._

To which Address his Majesty was pleased to return the following most gracious answer:—

I THANK YOU FOR THIS ADDRESS, AND FOR THIS FRESH MARK OF YOUR DUTY AND AFFECTION TO MY PERSON AND GOVERNMENT. YOU MAY ALWAYS DEPEND UPON THE CONTINUANCE OF MY PROTECTION. *

(* *Gentleman_s Magazine*, vol. xiv. p. 164.)

A serious rebellion soon afterward threatened the nation, the adherents of the Pretender being actually in arms, and even making a rapid progress towards the metropolis. The King had resolved to take the field, and to plant the royal standard on Finchley Common. The Deputies of the Dissenters in London were speedily called together; they met on the 27th of September, and resolved, _That it be recommended to the body of protestant Dissenters to express their utmost zeal and readiness to join with any number of his Majesty_s subjects, in order to support his Majesty_s person and government in the present time of danger, in any legal way that shall be most effectual._

A circular letter was sent by them into the country, in pursuance of the above resolution; and it is highly probably that this spirited conduct led to the formation of armed associations of Dissenters, and that some of their principal men were honoured with commissions from the King. Even ministers were seen encouraging their people to enlist themselves under these banners, and their meeting-houses were used for the purpose of training their youth to arms. They who had accepted commissions, had, by so doing, made themselves liable to the penalties of the Test Act; but their loyalty and patriotism prevailed; and England witnessed the strange sight of beholding men willing to spend their blood in the support of a government, which had refused to admit them even, to the paltry office of an exciseman, or a tide-waiter of the customs, without requiring from them the sacrifice of their most sacred and conscientious feeling.

1745: Form of Association.

The following is the form of the Association which was signed on this trying occasion:— We whose names are subscribed, being of opinion that in times so full of danger and treasonable practices as these are, a union of our hearts and forces will be most conducive to his Majesty_s safety, and the good of our country,—do voluntarily and willingly bind ourselves, every one of us to the other, jointly and severally, in the band of one firm and loyal society, and do hereby promise, that with our whole powers, bodies, lives, and estates, we, and every of us, will stand by and assist each other in the defence of his Majesty_s sacred person and government, and pursue the said popish Pretender and traitor._

1745: Address to the King.

In the next month, the Dissenting Ministers of the Three Denominations in London were forward in testifying their affection to the King and his government, by presenting the following Address to his Majesty, by the hands of that eminently loyal minister, Mr. Joseph Stennett, who had the honour of being personally known to, and esteemed by the King. The London Gazette published the Address, and the Reply of his Majesty.

_Kensington, October 3, 1745. This day the following Address of the Protestant Dissenting Ministers, in and about the cities of London and Westminster, was presented to the King by the Rev. Joseph Stennett, attended by several of his brethren; being

introduced by his Grace the Duke of Newcastle, one of his Majesty's principal Secretaries of State.

TO THE KING'S MOST EXCELLENT MAJESTY.

The humble Address of the Protestant Dissenting Ministers, in and about the cities of London and Westminster.

Most gracious Sovereign,

We, your most dutiful and faithful subjects, beg leave to approach your royal person with great thankfulness to God, and affectionate congratulations to your Majesty, on your safe and happy return to your British dominions, on the prosperity of your arms in North America, and on the success of your zealous and prudent endeavours to restore the balance of power in Europe to its ancient and natural situation.

As the religious and civil liberties, the happiness and honour of the nation, have been always your Majesty's unwearied care, we cannot but detest and abhor the present unnatural and rebellious attempt to impose upon these kingdoms a Papist and abjured Pretender. We trust in God, that so wicked and desperate an enterprise will issue in the speedy and utter overthrow of these infatuated traitors, and the still firmer establishment of your Majesty's throne and the succession in your illustrious family; in which, under Divine Providence, the enjoyment of all that is dear to us depends.

Nothing, Sire, we are persuaded, within the power of the protestant Dissenters, will be wanting to defend and secure your Majesty's just and undoubted right to the imperial crown of these realms; the weight of which you have always supported with so such dignity to yourself, and happiness to your people.

We shall never cease to offer our most fervent prayers to the great Sovereign of heaven and earth, for the preservation of your Majesty's invaluable life, the tranquillity and glory of your reign, and the conveyance of our liberties, under the protection of your royal house, to the end of time.

1745: His Majesty's Reply.

To which his Majesty was pleased to return this most gracious answer:—

I THANK YOU FOR THIS LOYAL ADDRESS, AND HAVE A FIRM DEPENDENCE ON YOUR STEADY ATTACHMENT TO MY PERSON AND GOVERNMENT; YOU MAY DEPEND ON THE CONTINUANCE OF MY PROTECTION.

They were received very graciously, and had all the honour to kiss his Majesty's hand.

1745: Dr. Gill's Sentiments of the Rebellion.

The opinion which the ministers and churches of our denomination had of this unnatural popish rebellion may be further judged of by the sentiments of one of their leading ministers, Dr. John Gill. In the notes of a manuscript sermon, on Psalm 25:3, *Let them be ashamed that transgress without a cause*, he thus wrote, December 2, 1745: *King David's subjects rebelled against him treacherously without cause*. Such are they who are risen up against our rightful Sovereign, King George; a parcel of perfidious, treacherous wretches; some of them who were in the last *rebellion*, and obtained his *father's* PARDON; others that partook yearly of his royal bounty for the instruction of their children; and all have enjoyed the blessings of his mild and gentle government; and therefore are without cause his enemies. This was the language of the heart; and of the heart when employed in the most solemn exercises.

1745: Faithfulness of Mr. Joseph Stennett.

The rebel army entered Derby on December 4, 1745. This was the most southerly point of their progress towards London. From hence, terrified by the approach of the army of his Royal Highness the Duke of Cumberland, to meet them, they began to retreat northwards on December 6. A sermon was preached by Mr. Joseph Stennett, and afterwards published, entitled *_Rabshakeh's Retreat, founded upon 2 Kings 19:27, 28.* The design of Mr. Stennett was to rouse the people to a sense of the national sins; to check the unmanly and pusillanimous panic which had struck the nation on the partial successes which had been obtained by the Pretender; *

(* This refers to his taking possession of Perth, on September 4; and of the City of Edinburgh, on September 17; the defeat of the royal army at Preston Pans, on September 21; and the surrender of Carlisle on November 21.)

and to show that it was their duty *_to act more becoming the characters of Christians and of Englishmen.* I feel compelled to extract from this sermon the part in which the moral state of the nation is depicted, because it exhibits this minister, so distinguished for his loyalty, as the faithful servant of Christ; as a watchman upon the walls of Zion, blowing the trumpet, and giving the alarm with no uncertain sound; and because it proves that though the preacher enjoyed the personal friendship of the monarch, and had many friends at Court, yet that he was not a *courtly* preacher. *_The Assyrian invasion,* says Mr. Stennett, *_was at a time when, notwithstanding the many sins of Judah complained of by the prophets, reformation had in some good degree prevailed among them; and I wish I could continue the parallel [between Judah and England]. But, alas! in the enjoyment of far greater advantages of light and knowledge than the Jews could ever boast of, has not atheism and a general contempt of divine Providence prevailed in this nation? What laboured attempts have been made to destroy the evidence of divine revelation! And how has it been abused by the mockery of the pens, as well as the tongues, of profane men! Under the privileges and obligations infinitely superior to theirs, have not all orders of men corrupted their way among us? How is the whole land corrupted with blasphemy and profaneness; with drunkenness and lewdness! What fraud and oppression, what falsehood and perjury; what unpunished enormities everywhere prevail! What iniquities, which would have made heathens blush, are openly practised on this great metropolis; and what an utter contempt of piety and practical religion is almost everywhere to be found! How is the dignity of our ancient and noble family stained by the luxury and effeminacy of their posterity! Many of the great pillars of our liberties among the great were, in times past, men fearing God, and not ashamed of the gospel of Christ; but how is the glory tarnished, and how are many of their estates wasted, by the riot of their successors, and by those that practise upon their lusts, and cheat them in their base and unmanly diversions! What encouragement is given to every new-invented contrivance to excite and encourage the vicious temper of the nation; and how do the low vulgar copy after the great!*

1745: Corrupt State of the Nation.

_Nor is this dreadful charge to be brought only against those who have utterly forsaken God; but, alas! they who make profession to have separated themselves from the wicked, have, I fear, almost filled up the cup of our national guilt. The dangerous errors which abound among them, and deeply affect the glory of divine grace, the honour of the great Saviour of the church, and the Spirit of God; such as strike at the only provision that is

made for the salvation of men, in the atonement of *Christ*, and his righteousness, and the work of his Spirit in the soul;—and the abuse of all this grace, by many who turn it into wantonness;—are dreadful evidences of our defection. So that, while some of our teachers are perpetually laying foundations, and erecting no buildings upon them, others are continually building without taking any care of the basis; while some set up practical religion in opposition to the doctrines of it, and despise most of its principles as idle speculations, others are sweating about points of mere controversy, and warm persuasions of the mind, to the great neglect of the genuine fruits of faith, and the best evidence of it in the growing purity of our hearts and lives. In a word, how do pride and envy, covetousness and formality, prevail! How are ordinances despised and neglected! How is religious conversation changed for fashionable, vain, and, I fear, vicious entertainments! How is family religion laid aside; and how are the duties of retirement, so necessary to improvement, impiety and holiness, by some almost entirely neglected, and by others carelessly performed! How is our glory faded! *How is the gold become dim; how is the most fine gold changed!* Surely we have outdone *Judah* in these things; and do we imagine the Lord does not see, or that he is not jealous for his glory? And should we not conclude from hence, that he is *whetting his glittering sword* against so provoking a people, and that *his hand* is about to take *hold of judgment*?—

1745: Absurdity of the Doctrine of Divine Right.

Then, to encourage the people, and to rouse the spirit of the nation, the animated preacher proceeds:— _God observes the cruelty and rage of our enemies. He sees that their present design is most unjust and barbarous. It is not only to touch our liberties, to bring us under tribute, and some degree of oppression;—but this attempt, like that of the Assyrian host, was designed utterly to destroy and lay waste our properties; to turn *this fruitful land into a wilderness*; and to overwhelm all that has rendered us the envy of the nations round about us, in one common ruin; to exchange our happy enjoyment of wealth and freedom, for that poverty and slavery which is the certain concomitant of *French* power; and the pure religion of the Scriptures, for that which is more contrary to all reason and revelation than the vilest inventions of the heathen nations.

—And what plea can be used on the part of our enemies for such an attempt as this? They tell us, indeed, that our kings have a divine and absolute right over us; that it is hereditary, and indefeasible; and, however they use their authority, that it is not to be controlled or disputed: which is in effect to say, that this royal prerogative entitles them to the same power over this great nation as every gentleman in it has over his horses and dogs; that the people were made for the prince, and not the prince appointed for them; that our Kings have an unalienable right to our estates and our labours, to our wives and our children, to our lives and our consciences; that, though they break through all the laws of reason, religion, and their country,—though they arbitrarily seize upon our substance, and abuse our wives and daughters,—though they subject our persons to the vilest drudgery of slaves,—and though they dispose of our lives at their pleasure, and, of what is still dearer, of our consciences too; yet they are accountable for all this to none but the great God, or to his vicegerent the *Pope*. And they tell us that this *implement* of *France*, who is sent over to make this modest demand upon us, comes attended with all these unalienable powers.

1745: Character of the Stuarts.

_But not to insist on his doubtful birth, which indeed is almost demonstrated to be suppositious by the care which was taken by his pretended parents to prevent the presence of such evidence as, on that occasion of all others that had ever happened of the like kind, was become necessary: I say, not to insist on this; blessed be God, with the light of the gospel, we have received such notions of those liberties which were bought at so dear a rate by our forefathers, that we are not easily to be *entangled again with such a yoke of bondage* as this. The dictates of reason and revelation speak of no such indefeasible right in any man; and the histories of all nations show, that these principles have everywhere, more or less, been obliged to give way to the common rights of mankind. Government is founded on contract; and as those subjects who break through the fundamental laws of it, suffer justly as traitors to their prince, and cannot convey to posterity what they have forfeited themselves; so if kings break through the fundamental engagements they entered into by their coronation oaths, they righteously forfeit their dignity and their power,—and their posterity, in such cases will always surely be glad of some better title to succession than this pretended unalienable inheritance.

_And what tribute do we owe to this *blessed* family, of which this person pretends to be immediately descended, that we should be willing to make a sacrifice of ourselves and our posterity, our liberties, and our religion, to their descendents, merely because of the nearness of their blood! Did not the first of them, by a most weak and iniquitous abuse of the power to which he was raised, lay a foundation for all that misery and bloodshed that followed on the tyrannical improvements in government which attended the second? And what national blessings were imported from France with the restoration of the third, but atheism, luxury, and lewdness; a waste of public faith, and public treasure; a servile subjection to French power, and French money; and encouragement to every sort of wickedness, and to popery, the worst of all; a persecution of the best principles, and the best men among us? And if we come down to the pretended father of him, who has now sent us a summons to submit our necks to the yoke, that he has prepared for us; was not his short reign made up of one continued open violation of the oath he took when he ascended to the throne; of a series of attempts to dispense with our laws, and to engross our properties; to establish popery, and to deprive us at once of all the traces of liberty that were left? And this, as Papists have not been ashamed to lay down as a public maxim, that they are obliged to keep *no faith with heretics*; so these princes have successively shown, that they apprehended they were under no obligations to keep any with subjects. And can there be any merit in this? Can a pretended near alliance to such princes as these give a man any just title to a compliment of those liberties, which the divine Providence, at the glorious revolution, under the conduct of our great deliverer William III. so miraculously wrested out of their hands?

1745: Dangers from a Popish Government.

_It has been often made appear, that a Papist is more incapable of governing this nation than an idiot or a lunatic; and, blessed be God, an experience now of near threescore years of sweet liberty, ever since the abdication of this lawless tyrant, and under a settlement of government established by the wisest counsels, by the united agreement of both houses of parliament, and the consent of clergy and laity, and of all ranks of men among us; a government confirmed by the most solemn oaths and appeals to heaven, defended by the blood of thousands of our brave countrymen, owned and guaranteed by the greatest powers on earth, and blessed with such an increase of riches and such a

continuation of civil and religious liberty abroad and at home, and such success abroad as no nation ever enjoyed before; I say, such an experimental conviction as this will never suffer us to go back again to Egypt, without such a struggle as is worthy in some measure the descendents of our brave ancestors._

To encourage his auditory to the most determined and persevering resistance, the preacher adds; _God has already put his hook in the nose of the leader of this rebellion, and his savage followers; he has put his bridle into their lips; their declarations and manifestoes have been spread before the God of heaven; and by the order of parliament treated, amidst the acclamations of this great metropolis, with the contempt which the treason contained in them deserves. Few have had inclination or temerity enough to join them in their inroad upon this southern part of the kingdom. They have been left to commit such excesses, especially in their return, as have given the nation a proper warning of what they must expect if they were to succeed. Some of their officers and stores of war have fallen into our hands by sea; and when this northern rabble, under their French and popish commanders, were saying, they would *pursue, and overtake, and divide the spoils* of a free and happy nation; in the approach of the brave Duke of Cumberland, with a few of those troops which humbled France in the fields of Dettingen, and put their monarch into no small fear at Fontenoy, they have been driven back with shame and precipitation, by the way which they came._

1745: Argument for resisting the Rebels.

In concluding his discourse, Mr. Stennett says, _Let us be humble under the mighty hand of God; and while we are *girding on our arms*, and *learning military skill*,—in order to defend ourselves against insurrections at home, and invasions from abroad, let us attend strictly to the Christian discipline, and put on *the whole armour of God*; let us labour continually, and with the greatest zeal and vigilance, to suppress and mortify our own corruptions, and resist all invasions made by the enemies of our souls on our spiritual concerns. And in the strength of the Lord, let us set up our banners against the enemies of the peace of these kingdoms. Our cause is good; it is the cause of God, of righteousness, of truth, and of liberty. Many of our ancestors have bravely fought, and bravely bled, in this quarrel. Long experience has taught us, that popery and true liberty are incompatible; and when our religious and civil freedom is gone, what is there left for a *Christian* or an *Englishman*?

745: Consequences of the Pretender being successful.

_What can you expect, my brethren and fellow subjects, from an invader, bred up in the policy of *France* and the religion of *Rome*; fired by revenge for what he is taught by the *father of lies*, and the *mother of harlots*, to be the unjust expulsion of his pretended father; sworn to subject you to the *Pope*; and bound by every tie that can bind a popish bigot, to reduce you to the yoke of France? Shall the pure knowledge and worship of God, happily planted in, and spread through this blessed land, give way to the absurdity, idolatry, ignorance, and blasphemies of popery? Will you exchange your Bibles for Latin missals, and the legends of lying monks? Will you suffer the temples of the Lord to become once more the habitations of cursed idols, of profane altars, and of antichristian priests? Can we read over the records of popish cruelty, which are plentifully to be found in the histories of all the nations, where any reformation from their blind and ignorant doctrines has been attempted; can we reflect upon the millions of poor *Indians*, who were murdered in *America*, under the blasphemous pretext of saving their souls; on the torrents of blood

which were shed in the massacres of *France* and *Ireland*; on the fires kindled in this land by the cruel and unnatural fathers of the accursed church, in which they burnt alive some of the holiest, humblest, best of men, that ever lived in this or any other nation; on the rage of popish princes, and popish priests, that the innocent blood of no age or sex, no not that of tender infants at the breast and in the womb, could ever satisfy; on the inquisition, with its racks and gibbets, its dungeons and its fires; a contrivance of theirs, a contrivance the most artfully and wickedly levelled against all truth and justice, and the liberties of mankind, of any that were ever proposed, or ever executed;—can we, I say, recollect these things, and refuse any assistance we can give, to prevent such an introduction of most execrable mischiefs on ourselves, our country, and our posterity?

_Let none of us be ensnared by the fair promises of *Papists*, whose religion not only allows of lying and equivocation, but obliges its votaries to it, when the service of the bloody prostitute, their mother, requires it;—a church, one of whose fundamental maxims is *to break all faith with heretics*; a maxim which has not only been practised by foreign princes, but in the most flagrant manner by the two last professed *Papists*, who, for the sins of this nation, for a season possessed the throne of it.

_Our laws are of our making, and they have a free course. We have a Prince on the throne, given us by the apparent hand of heaven, the greatest and the best Prince in the world; who has, during the whole course of his reign, made the laws and our welfare the rules of his government; who has always been ready to hazard his precious life for our preservation; and who can have no enemy in the world but for his attachment to the protestant cause, and his successful interposition in the defence of the liberties of *Europe*; who never willingly injured one of his subjects; and the greatest blemish of whose government has been, the mercy he has extended to some of those wretches, who are now seeking his crown and his life.

He has gloriously devoted himself and his family to the defence of his dear people. May his people, in grateful return, constantly and cheerfully maintain his just rights, and the succession in his illustrious house! May they readily part with their treasure, and, if called to it, their blood, in support of his throne; and for their own sakes, for the sake of religion, freedom, and their dear posterity, most readily unsheath their swords, in the strength of heaven; and never put them up again till these unnatural rebels at home are suppressed, and these invaders from abroad are thoroughly made sensible of the folly and wickedness of their attempt; and till, with the help of God, the ambitious French fermentor of this mischief is brought within due bounds! May such success attend our prayers *and our swords*, as shall show to the whole world, that the Lord himself is our God, and the great captain of our salvation!

Had this address, on such a trying occasion, been delivered at the head of an army, by a general in military uniform, instead of being uttered in a proscribed *conventicle*, by an *Anabaptist* teacher, it would have ranked with, if not have been considered as far superior to, the most able military harangues (most of them composed for them by others after the battle was over) that are attributed to the famous generals of Carthage and Rome. What can be produced of Hannibal or Caesar, which breathes more heroic ardour, more patriotic zeal, more determined devotedness to the welfare of their country, more cool and deliberate enthusiasm? What can be produced more eloquent, or more chaste; more comprehensive, or more concise; that contains more of the thoughts that breathe, and the words that burn,—than this piece of Christian heroism and constitutional loyalty? It is said

that when Cicero addressed the Romans, the people left the senate admiring the orator; but that when Demosthenes harangued the Athenians, they rose with incensed indignation against the invader of their country, crying with one voice, *Down with Philip.* A similar effect was produced upon the congregation which Mr. Stennett addressed: they unsheathed their swords, and the meeting-house, which had been erected for a popish chapel, and had been used for the idolatry of the mass, and the absurdities of transubstantiation, was now converted to a place for training men to military discipline, who were determined to shed their blood, if that were necessary, to defend a British king, and a protestant government, against French ambition, and popish tyranny. *

(* The above statement rests on the authority of my friend George Bagster, Esq. late of Pancras, nearly fifty years a worthy deacon of the church in Eagle-street. He had it from an old person who was a member of the church in Wild-street at the time, and who also said that they were resolved to join the *royal standard* as soon as it should be hoisted.)

1745: Sentiments of the King.

The King knew how to distinguish between his friends and his enemies. The following sentiments, uttered in the King's speech to parliament, Oct. 17, 1745, must have been very galling to *some* of his *protestant* subjects!— *I have,* said his Majesty, *throughout the whole course of my reign, made the laws of the land the rule of my government, and the preservation of the constitution in the church and state, and the rights of my people, the main end and aim of my actions. It is, therefore, the more astonishing, that any of my protestant subjects, who have known and enjoyed the benefits resulting from them, and heard of the imminent dangers these kingdoms were wonderfully delivered from, by the happy revolution, should, by any arts and management, be deluded into measures that must at once destroy their religion and liberties, introduce popery and arbitrary power, and subject them to a foreign yoke.*

1745: Bill of Indemnity.

The awkward dilemma to which the parliament were reduced after the rebellion was over, respecting the protestant Dissenters, is indeed very affecting; and but for its relation to the sacred rights of conscience, would be highly amusing. The sentiments of that eminent statesman, the late Right Honourable Charles James Fox, on this subject, are worthy of being recorded in this place. In his speech on the repeal of the Test Act, on March 2, 1790, Mr. Fox said, *A candid examination of the history of Great Britain, would, in his opinion, be favourable to the Dissenters. In the rebellions in 1715 and 1745, this country was extremely indebted to their exertions. During those troublesome periods they had acted with the spirit and fidelity of British subjects, zealous and vigilant in defence of the constitution; at both these periods they stood forward the champions of British liberty, and obtained an eminent share in repelling the foes of the House of Hanover, Their exertions then were so magnanimous, that he had no scruple to assert, that to their endeavors we owe the preservation of the church and state. What was the reward they obtained? We generously granted them a pardon for their noble exploits, by passing an act of indemnity in their favour. Gentlemen should recollect, that at the times alluded to, the high-churchmen did not display much gallantry, for many appeared perplexed and pusillanimous. Hence the superior glory of the Dissenters, who, regardless of every danger, had boldly stood forth in the defence of the rights and liberties of the kingdoms.—The Dissenters, regardless of the foolish acts existing against them, drew their*

swords in defence of their fellow-subjects, *and made the scale immediately preponderate* in their favour. The church, as a very liberal encouragement for their achievements, adopted the plan already described, by passing an act of indemnity or pardon, *for the heinous crime of defending the constitution!*_

An Address from the general Body of Dissenting Ministers in London was presented to the King, _upon account of the late and glorious victory over the rebels,_ at Culloden, by William Duke of Cumberland.

1746: Bill of Indemnity.

The humble Address of the Protestant Dissenting Ministers in and about the Cities of London and Westminster, was presented June 25, 1746.

_May it please your Majesty,

_We, your Majesty_s most dutiful and loyal subjects, humbly beg leave to approach your Majesty_s presence, to offer our sincerest and warmest congratulations for the happy suppression of that impious and unnatural rebellion, which hath been excited and carried on by ungrateful and perjured men, in favour of an outlawed, abjured, and popish Pretender.

_How just were our fears at the unexpected progress of this wicked attempt; and to what substantial miseries must we have been reduced, had God, for our sins, permitted it finally to prosper! Your Majesty_s just and equitable government, and in this every dear and valuable interest belonging to us as men, Christians, and protestants, were the sacred objects immediately struck at, and the sacrifices intended to be made to the ambition and perfidy of France, the superstition and cruelty of Rome, and the presumptuous claims of the desperate and worthless invader of your Majesty_s dominions.

_The seasonable and entire victory with which God hath blessed your Majesty_s arms, is attended with so many happy consequences, not only to these kingdoms, but to the Protestant religion and the liberties of Europe, as will never be forgotten, whilst we know how to value the inestimable blessings it hath secured; and well deserves all the most grateful and public acknowledgments to Almighty God, that a people doomed to ruin, and saved by him from destruction, is capable of returning.

_The choice of his Royal Highness the Duke of Cumberland, to be at the head of your Majesty_s forces on this important occasion, is the noblest demonstration of your Majesty_s high regard for the national welfare, and that in your royal breast the private affection of a father is taught to give way to the public good; and will transmit the remembrance of your Majesty to all future ages under the most honourable character that a king can bear,—the friend, the father of your people. And how distinguished is your Majesty_s happiness, that the freeing of these kingdoms from outrage, sedition, and rebellion, was by Providence reserved for this illustrious royal youth, early treading the paths of glory, and formed under your great example to be a scourge to your Majesty_s and his country_s enemies, and a general blessing to these favoured kingdoms!

_That your Majesty my long live, beloved and honoured by all your subjects, feared and submitted to by all your enemies, and be, under God, continued the guardian of liberty, and the protector of true religion; that all your majesty_s blessings may be hereditary, your honours descend to his Royal Highness the Prince of Wales, and the succession to your imperial crown never fail in your august family; these, Sir, are our fervent prayers, and of all who wish well to themselves, or have any just concern for the safety and happiness of their posterity._

1746: His Majesty's Reply.

To which Address his Majesty was pleased to return the following most gracious answer:—

I THANK YOU FOR YOUR CONGRATULATIONS ON THE SUCCESS OF MY ARMS, UNDER THE COMMAND OF MY SON, THE DUKE, AGAINST THE REBELS; I AM TRULY SENSIBLE OF THE ZEAL WHICH YOU HAVE SHOWED, UPON ALL OCCASIONS, FOR THE SUPPORT OF MY GOVERNMENT; AND YOU MAY DEPEND UPON THE CONTINUANCE OF MY PROTECTION. *

(* *Gentleman's Magazine*, vol. xvi. p. 327.)

The 9th of October, 1746, was _appointed by his Majesty for a national thanksgiving to Almighty god for the suppression of the late unnatural rebellion._ Mr. Joseph Stennett published a sermon preached by him on that occasion, entitled, _A Thanksgiving Sermon for the Victory at Culloden._ This was founded upon Ezek. 35:10, 11. He thus designates the deliverance which God had wrought for England—_A deliverance that has saved us from the heaviest and basest chains that France itself could forge for our liberties, and from that most accursed of all abominations which Rome has long waited to impose upon our consciences; a deliverance which has defended and established the throne of the worthiest and best of princes, which has secured the most happy constitution in the world, and preserved to each of us, and to our posterity, every thing that can be dear to Protestants, and a free people._ He adds, _The loss of that battle would have been this; we and our posterity must have worn a yoke, the weight of which must have equalled all the brave actions of our fathers in defence of our religion and liberties, and all our own attempts to preserve them. We must have been slaves to Rome, to France, and to the base and even the degenerate pretenders to a succession of tyrants, who would have torn our laws in pieces, subverted our happy constitution, wrested our Bibles out of our hands, and filled our temples with the most wicked of all priests, and the most abominable of all idols. Ten thousand miseries must have been our lot, and that of our posterity._

1748: Peace with France.

When the peace with France in 1748 was concluded, it was proposed, in a meeting of the General Body of Ministers, to present an address of congratulation on that account. This motion was negatived, but they were unanimous in expressing their pleasure and gratitude on the safe arrival of the King at his palace, and in his kingdom. This was published in the London Gazette.

1748: Address at the Close of the War.

_St. James's, February 11, 1748-9. The following Address of the protestant Dissenting Ministers, in and about the cities of London and Westminster, has been presented to his Majesty by the Rev. Henry Miles, D. D. attended by several of his brethren; being introduced by his Grace the Duke of Newcastle, one of his Majesty's principal Secretaries of State.

_TO THE KING'S MOST EXCELLENT MAJESTY.

_The humble Address of the Protestant Dissenting Ministers, in and about the Cities of London and Westminster.

_Most Gracious Sovereign,

_We your Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the Protestant Dissenting Ministers, in and about the Cities of London and Westminster, humbly approach your sacred person with our most affectionate congratulations, and with the warmest sense of the divine

goodness, on your Majesty's safe return to your British dominions, after the happy issue of your vigilant and unwearied labours to restore the tranquility of Europe.

Though God, for our sins, has not permitted us to reap all the advantages which we might otherwise have expected, from the war in which your Majesty has been so justly and so necessarily engaged; yet, during the course of it, the whole world has been witness to the hereditary courage and firmness of your royal mind, to the bravery of your troops, and to the success of your naval force. And when we reflect upon your Majesty's zeal for the liberties of mankind, together with your just resentment of any invasion of the rights of your crown, which are always inseparable from those of your subjects; we can never enough admire the moderation and paternal goodness which have induced your Majesty to embrace the first opportunity of entering into measures to stop the effusion of human blood, and prevent the other dreadful calamities of war.

_It remains that your people make a right improvement of this present happy situation; and may your Majesty's great example engage every rank of men among us to cultivate those generous, peaceful, and charitable virtues which are most truly amiable in themselves, and abundantly recommended by the example of Christ.

_For our parts, we take leave, on this occasion, to renew our assurances to your Majesty, that we are determined in our several stations, and as far as our influence may reach, most diligently and constantly to promote that unfeigned and steadfast loyalty and affection to your Majesty, which by the blessing of God may best tend to secure all the advantages we enjoy under your just and gentle administration.

_That your Majesty's most precious life may be long preserved; that true religion, the greatest glory of human nature, and the strongest bond of human society, may always flourish under your royal patronage; that the hearts of your Majesty's subjects may be every day more firmly united in their attachment to your person and government; and that the protestant succession in your illustrious house, may be continued down to our latest posterity, are the most ardent prayers of,

May it please your majesty,

Your Majesty's most humble, most faithful.

And most obedient subjects and servants.

1748: The King's gracious Reply.

_To which Address his Majesty was pleased to return the following most gracious answer.

_I THANK YOU FOR THIS LOYAL ADDRESS, AND HAVE A FIRM
DEPENDENCE UPON YOUR STEADY ATTACHMENT TO MY PERSON AND
GOVERNMENT. YOU MAY BE ASSURED OF THE CONTINUANCE OF MY
PROTECTION._

The general Body of Ministers at the Library refused to congratulate the King respecting the terms on which the peace had been concluded. Mr. Joseph Stennett always loyal, protestant, and constitutional, preached a sermon at Little Wild-street, on the 25th of April, 1749, _the day appointed by his Majesty, for a general thanksgiving to Almighty God for the peace._ This was afterwards published: it was founded upon Psalm 85:8. Enumerating the reasons the nation had for thanksgiving, he says, _The balance of power in the empire is secured; Flanders is restored; Holland is rescued and preserved, and its great dangers have led it to fly to its most natural security, under the hereditary protection of a race of princes, who have been the guardians of the liberties of that commonwealth

from its foundation. As to ourselves, the right of the best of kings, and the succession of it in his royal protestant line, on which every thing that is dear to us and our posterity depends, is again recognized by all the contracting powers; and his throne more effectually secured than ever, by the happy suppression of a most unnatural and dangerous rebellion; and by the provision of such a law, as is well calculated to destroy that jurisdiction of the little tyrants in the remotest part of this island, which has enslaved such multitudes of poor people, and for many ages rendered them the fit instruments to carry on the most desperate designs of their leaders, in order to destroy our constitution._

1749: *Controversy upon the Modern Question.*

Having thus brought the reader to the close of these national struggles for protestantism and liberty, and shewn him the patriotic loyalty of the Baptists in common with all others of the protestant Dissenters, I shall now return to state some circumstances which relate to the internal state of the denomination.

The manner of preaching the gospel, by some of the Baptist ministers, to unconverted sinners, had been greatly altered during this reign. From the zeal which they displayed for the peculiar doctrines of Calvinism, and their tenaciousness for the sentiment that *salvation is of the Lord*, and by grace alone without human endeavours, they were led into an extreme, so as to deny that all who hear the gospel are called to that exercise of repentance and faith which is connected with salvation thus taking the negative side of what was then called the modern question, _Whether it be the duty of all men to whom the gospel is published, to repent and believe in Christ?_ So far as I have been able to discover, this subject had never been made a question by our ministers, previously to the end of the last reign.

1689: *Manner of Preaching among the Baptists.*

In a letter signed by many of the London ministers, in 1675, (printed in the first volume, p. 418, amongst whom were some very eminent divines, especially Mr. William Collins and Dr. Nehemiah Coxe, who wrote the Confession of Faith adopted by the General Assembly, in 1689, are the following sentiments:– _Tis certain that no man can, without the assistance of the Holy Spirit either repent or believe; yet it will not therefore follow, that impenitency and unbelief are no sins: if these be sins, than the contrary must be their duty._ And that their preaching was formed upon this model, there is abundant evidence. I shall first make a quotation from a sermon of Mr. Benjamin Keach, as an illustration of this observation. _Labour,_ says he, _to get full sight and sense of your sins, and of your lost and undone condition by nature. Oh what a miserable creature hath sin made man, or rather man by sin made himself! Labour to get brokenness of heart. Oh strive to melt from the sight and sense of your iniquity!–Labour to get an interest in Jesus Christ. Oh that this opportunity might have some tendency this way! Unless you believe that I am he, saith Jesus Christ, you shall die in your sins. Soul, never rest and be satisfied, till thou canst say with Thomas, My Lord and my God, John xx. 28. Can you still stand it out against such precious patience, and offers of grace? Will you not yet open to Christ? Shall he cry and call unto you, and will you give him no entertainment? Can you close in with a better friend? How long hath he stood knocking at the door of your hearts! Was he not graciously calling upon you the last Lord_s day? And now in mercy he is giving you another knock. Oh fear lest he depart!

1690: *Mr. Benjamin Keach, and Mr. John Bunyan*

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Have you not let him stand till his *head was wet with dew, and his locks with the drops of night*? Sinner, hasten to him, and open the door. Dost thou not hear that lovely voice that was spoken to the blind man, *Be of good comfort; rise, he calleth thee*, Mark 10:49. It may be you will ask, *Where?* I'll tell thee. If thou art a weary and burdened soul, that feelest the weight of thy sin, there is a precious word spoken for thy sake, take hold of it, Matt. xi. 28. *Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart; and ye shall find rest unto your souls.* Oh the sweetness of the word, *Take it, and receive it.* labour in the strength of Christ to oppose every sin. See that there be no sweet morsel hid, no *Delilah*; no pleasant nor profitable lust spared. Take heed you do not sin against the light; neglect no conviction of sin or duty. _ *

(* Mr. Keach's Sermon for Mr. John Norcot.)

The reader need scarcely be informed, that the admired works of Mr. Bunyan, his *Pilgrim's Progress* and his *Holy War*, which are designed to represent the manner in which the unconverted are brought to repentance and faith by the ministry of the gospel, are all formed upon the same model. In the former of these, by the metaphor of the hen and her chickens, Mr. Bunyan represents the free invitations of the gospel to unconverted men, as well as the special grace of the Holy Spirit in making those calls efficacious to the conversion of the elect.

In the latter, if the reader will consult the manner in which the four captains, under the immediate command of the prince Emanuel, conducted the war to recover the lost town of Mansoul to the authority of its rightful Sovereign, and the entire failure if the enterprise, until the Prince subdued them by his love; he will find the same sentiments luminously and strongly illustrated.

The same opinion is seen in others of the works of this eminent divine, especially in that beautiful little piece, *Come and welcome to Jesus Christ.* _

1710: Mr. John Piggott.

Mr. John Piggott, a most judicious and doctrinal preacher, thus addresses the unconverted in his funeral sermon, for Mr. Thomas Harrison. *Oh adore the patience and long suffering of God, that you are yet alive, and have one call more from the pulpit, and another very awful one from the grave of that person who used to fill it. His death calls upon you to repent, and turn to close with Christ, and make sure of heaven. Let me entreat you by all that is sacred, by the joys of heaven and the torments of hell, by the interests of your never dying souls, by Christ's bloody sweat in the garden, and agony upon the cross, that you immediately close with Christ, and receive him as offered in the gospel; submitting to his sceptre, as well as depending on his sacrifice; that you may eternally be lodged in the bosom of his love.* _

1722: Mr. John Skepp Publishes on Divine Energy, &c.

The first minister among the Baptists, so far as I have discovered, who adopted a different method, was Mr. John Skepp, who was settled about 1710, at Curriers' Hall, in London Wall, afterwards called Cripplegate meeting.

He had been a member of Mr. Hussey's church at Cambridge, and appeared to have fully imbibed the scheme of doctrine advocated by his pastor in the work entitled, *God's operations of Grace, but no offers of Grace.* _ This book was written expressly against all awakening applications to the consciences of the unconverted, with the avowed design of

securing to the Holy Spirit the sole glory of converting and sanctifying the souls of the elect. And Mr. Skepp, it should seem, would not persuade sinners to listen to the calls of the gospel, lest he should despoil God of the honour of their conversion. But Mr. Skepp must be heard in reference to this subject. _This way of reasoning,_ says he, _either with saints or sinners, is not to be discarded out of the ministry, nor slighted or turned to another meaning; though, if I might be allowed freedom to speak, I think few handle these so usefully and distinctly as to keep themselves and others clear from *Arminianism*, in its notion of the creature_s power and liberty of will to do all that is required of a sinner by the gospel ministry; and though they may not design this, yet the ignorant and unskillful part of their auditory perceive no difference between Calvinists and Arminians, when upon awakening and practical subjects. And I well remember, when I was very young, having learned the Assembly_s Catechism, and read some confessions of faith, and doctrinal articles of the reformed churches, with their arguments against Papists and Arminians; I used to be stumbled at Arminian discourses, from such as were accounted strict Calvinists. I call them Arminian discourses; for it is not throwing in a few words, by way of parenthesis, that will mend the matter, nor sufficiently atone for an hour_s practical discourse in an Arminian dialect, where the Spirit_s work, both as to previous renovation, or continued influences and assistance, is not so much as mentioned till just at last; and then with this Arminian, or Semi-pelagian close– _I know you cannot do these things of yourselves, unless God enable you; and therefore you must rely upon him, and earnestly beg divine assistance. This then is what I say, that exhortations to duty, moral or religious, either to saints or sinners, enforced by proper arguments and reasonings, are not to be discarded, but carefully and distinctly used; whilst still we, agreeably to Scripture, maintain and defend the necessity of divine energy, or the Holy Spirit_s work of renovation and efficacious grace; these things being not at all repugnant, but agreeable and consistent, as appears in these words of the apostle, *Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling: for it is God that worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.* Phil. 2:12, 13. Agreeably to which good St. Austin frequently prayed, _Lord give what thou commandest, and command what thou wilt.'

1722: His Work similar to Mr. Hussey s.

Had we not been previously acquainted with the system of this worthy minister, who doubtless thought he was securing to the Holy Spirit the sole glory of converting and sanctifying the souls of the elect, we should have been ready to inquire, What do those ministers whom Mr. Skepp charges with using an Arminian and Semi-pelagian dialect, say more than he himself has said, namely, that it is the work of ministers to exhort sinners to duty moral or religious, and to enforce those exhortations by arguments and reasonings, which he affirms is not to be neglected, &c. It is true, he says, that these reasonings with, and exhortations to, sinners, must be enforced by *proper* arguments, and be *carefully* and *distinctly* used. But was it modest in Mr. Skepp to be so certain that the Assembly of Divines, and the compilers of all the Reformed Creeds, and most other ministers, were all Arminians and Semi-pelagians, while they had always considered themselves to be Calvinists? and that calling upon unconverted sinners to *repent and believe the gospel*, to *repent and turn to God*, and *do works meet for repentance*, was not only consistent with the example of Christ and his apostles, but strictly accordant with, and not repugnant to, the doctrine of DIVINE ENERGY, or the Holy Spirit_s work of

renovation and efficacious grace! Did it follow, because Mr. Skepp could not reconcile the difficulties of total depravity and human accountability, that they were necessarily absurdities? Or, because sinners are dead in trespasses and sins, that therefore the Divine command is not to be obeyed, and the inspired example to be imitated, in saying, *Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light?* I shall here introduce the remarks of no mean critic, who, at the time he wrote them, was an orthodox minister: *_Mr. Hussey_s designs,_* says Robinson, *_and those of other divines, who have adopted his method, was to secure to the Holy Spirit the sole glory of converting and sanctifying the souls of the elect. But other preachers, who use sober applications, are equally zealous to preserve the glory of God; and if the last may not use applications, lest they should rob God of the glory of sanctifying the heart, assuredly the former may not use explications, lest they should deprive God of the honour of enlightening or informing the mind. In both, the means are ours, and the blessing his!* After all, those doctrinal Divines, who affect to discharge their office fully, by narrating and reasoning, and who reject persuasions, should not forget that reasoning is *persuasion*; and that they themselves slide almost as often as any men, into personal application, especially in discussing certain favourite points of divinity. This remark is abundantly verified in Mr. Hussey_s manuscript sermons, a hundred of which, I suppose, I have read; and I think I could exemplify it plentifully, were it necessary, from printed sermons of others, of his judgment on the article of *application*._ *

(* Robinson_s *Claude*, vol. ii. p. 327.)

1722: Mr. Skepp_s Arguments.

Mr. Skepp, it will be perceived, objects not to the employment of *_arguments and reasonings,_* and *_the enforcing of these with promises and threatenings,_* in the ministry of the gospel; which is *_the blessed news and glad tidings of a salvation that is all of grace;_* but he thought these were not *_handled so usefully and distinctly as to keep clear from using the Arminian dialect!_* Exhortations to religious duty, even to sinners, enforced by proper arguments and reasonings, are not to be discarded. *

(* Skepp_s *Divine Energy*, &c. p. 57, 61, 62, 63.)

Very well. But should not Mr. Skepp have left his brother to his own judgment and conscience, as to the most proper way of enforcing the promises and threatenings? It should seem, from Mr. Skepp_s book, that owing to a fear, lest he should apply these *improperly* to the cases of the unconverted, or lest the unskilful part of his auditory should perceive no difference between a Calvinist and Arminian, when upon awakening and practical subjects, he neglected *applications* of the promises and threatenings of the gospel to unconverted sinners altogether; and rather left them to infer they had no share in the blessings of a gospel ministry, than even to be suspected of using a Semi-pelagian address! I may, perhaps, be told that, at the close of his book of 318 pages, (written to prove what no *Calvinist* ever doubted, that DIVINE ENERGY is absolutely necessary to renew the heart of an unconverted sinner before he will, with his heart, believe in the Lord Jesus Christ,) Mr. Skepp *_gives some cautions to such souls, as have in some measure found and experienced a power attending the ministry of the gospel reaching their hearts;_* that he cautions them *_to have a care of those ways, those practices, those customs and companions that may have a tendency to harden them again;_* to *_avoid the*

1722: Their tendency.

ways of sin and vice;_ to _take care not to grieve that Spirit which hath began thus to work: quench it not, grieve it not, and resist it not._ _These are,_ he adds, _cautions given by the Holy Ghost, and they are not needless. They are suited to such as are under a begun work of the Holy Spirit; that they do not turn their backs upon him, that speaketh thus in a peculiar manner to their souls; and saith to them in particular,—*To you is this gospel sent*; let the language of your soul be, *I will hear what God the Lord will say unto me. He will speak peace to his people, but let them not turn again to folly*. Sin is of a hardening nature; and one sinner hath destroyed much good. Though many have begun well, and have given some hopes to others that the work of God was begun in their souls; yet in a little time, by giving way to vicious company, *they have been swallowed up in sin*, they have quite lost their profession; I still believe that the foundation of God standeth sure; he will bring them back again, but it will be with broken bones. *

(* Skepp_s *Divine Energy*, p. 314.)

Thus in his care to avoid Scylla, he runs upon Charybdis; and rather than be suspected by them of holding the Arminian notion of the self-determining power of the will in conversion, he encourages them to conclude that, though _they are swallowed up in sin,_ yet, having once _given some hopes to others that the work of God was begun upon their souls,_ this was sufficient evidence of their being the elect of God, and they might calculate upon being at last eternally saved, *yet so as by fire!* But is this *saying to the wicked, it shall be ill with him?* Is it not rather encouraging mere *stony-ground hearers* to conclude, notwithstanding the declarations of the Saviour to the contrary, that they have received the seed of the gospel into good and honest hearts; and though they bear nothing but thorns and briers, they will at last be owned by him as the righteous; and saved by him from the desert of sin, though they were left under its dominion? A conclusion this so diametrically opposed to the design of the gospel, and to the effects of the *Divine energy* upon the heart, that it is infinitely more to be dreaded, than to be suspected of using an Arminian dialect, when employing *the words which the Holy Ghost teacheth*.

1730: Illustration of the Differences among Calvinist Ministers.

I have been more particular in remarking upon the tendency of Mr. Skepp_s *non-invitation, non-application* scheme, because it was by him introduced among the Baptists; and having thus traced a river that has plentifully watered our churches, to its source, I shall now proceed to trace it in its progress. *

(* Of the different ways of addressing the unconverted among Calvinistic ministers, I recommend the following as an illustration. There were, in a certain kingdom, two brothers, both of whom filled the office of herald at court, and each of whom was equally attached to the Sovereign, and professed an equal regard to his laws, and equal zeal for the honour of his government; but who maintained different opinions as to the best manner of making his subjects acquainted with his royal proclamations.

These brothers, for the sake of distinction, I shall name them *Calvinian*, and *Calvinus*. Calvinian was much the eldest, and Calvinus was young, and had been but lately invested with his office.

It happened that a rebellion having broken out in a province of the King_s dominions, and the rebels having been defeated and overcome, some of them had sued for mercy, and had obtained it instantly; but there were others who still

persisted in justifying their rebellion, and in thinking and even speaking seditiously, and in acting traiterously against the King.

It was to reduce these to an acknowledgment of their unjust thoughts and rebellious practices, that Calvinian and Calvinus were sent in the character both of *heralds*, to proclaim the terms upon which their reconciliation with the sovereign might be effected, and of *ambassadors*, to entreat them to be reconciled to the King. The terms were, that whosoever would sue for pardon in the name of the King's Son, who had obtained great merit in the prosecution of the war, and who had great affection towards the rebels, should be sure to obtain it.

On its being known that the brothers had arrived, and for what purpose, a great multitude assembled at the chief place of concourse, at the entering of the gates of the city: among these were both the pardoned, and the contumacious rebels. Calvinus first addressed the assembly. _The rebellion,_ he said, _in which you have been found against your lawful Prince, was unprovoked, unjust, and highly aggravated. You who have been pardoned already, owe much to the unmerited clemency of your Prince, out of respect to whose merits you were reprieved: his favour has been both rich and free towards you. I know, indeed, that his thoughts were towards you before you ever thought of seeking for mercy. As for those who are still rebels at heart, though they cannot injure their Sovereign, they are the children of a notorious rebel, whose whole inheritance was lost for his rebellions. They were born with a disposition to hate the King; they have, as if it were their very nature, always plotted against his authority, and refused to be in subjection to his laws; and as they have disobeyed the laws of the land, so they have no power to believe and receive the proclamation of mercy now made known before them. It may be, the thoughts of the King's heart are towards some of them as they were towards you; and then they will some time or other be reconciled to him; but should that not be the case, what I say, and what they can do will all amount to nothing. Oh that the King's heart might be inclined towards them! Awful will be their condition, should they be executed for their rebellions; as they certainly will be if they repent not of their conduct, and do not believe what I have said about the merits of the Prince; for they are already found guilty, and are exposed to the fierce anger of the King._

Calvinian now spoke, and with tears of compassion, and expressions of gratitude towards his Prince, who had sent him on such a gracious mission to the rebels, he exclaimed,–

With praise I view the awful scene,
My bowels yearn o'er guilty men;
And feign my pity would reclaim;
And snatch the fire-brands from the flame.

Then looking towards the rebels, he said, _To you, oh men, I call; my voice is directed to you. Hear now, ye rebels; hear, and your souls shall live. You have heard what Calvinus has said of the guilt and just punishment of your father, and the correct statement which he has given of your rebellious disposition and conduct towards the King. You have heard too how he has magnified the merits

of the Prince, and the unmerited friendship which the King has shown towards these your fellow-rebels, who, having confessed their guilt, and sued for pardon in the name of the Prince, have freely obtained it! But you are still rebellious, though you know all this. Suffer me to *expostulate* with you. Are your hands so strong, that you think of resisting the execution of his laws? Or can your heart endure the penalty to which your rebellions have exposed you? Permit me to *advise* you. Give up your rebellious practices; withdraw from the wicked society to which you belong; and change your thoughts respecting the laws of the King. They are not grievous laws, as you have imagined, nor is the King an unjust monarch. Acknowledge that your rebellions were unprovoked; do not attempt to justify yourselves; but cast yourselves upon the mercy of the King. Do not suffer yourselves to be persuaded that the King is not willing to shew mercy; he waits to be gracious, and he delighteth in mercy. He sent his Son, the Prince, into the war, on purpose to discover his mercy towards the rebellious province of which you are natives. He has already pardoned many who were as guilty as you are. He has commanded me to tell you, and he has condescended to appeal to his crown and dignity for its truth, that he has no pleasure that the rebels should die, and that he would much rather sign a *reprieve* than a *warrant of execution*. I most earnestly *persuade* you, as you have reason to dread his anger, and as you are encouraged to expect his mercy, to forsake the tents of these wicked men, and cast yourselves at the feet of your Sovereign. The merits of the Prince present sufficient grounds for his being reconciled towards you, and sufficient reasons for you to be reconciled to the King. I *pray* you, therefore, and *entreat* you, and earnestly *beseech* you in the name of the Prince, that you be *reconciled* unto the King. *Repent* of your rebellions; *believe* the royal proclamation; *trust* to the mediation of the Prince; present a humble and honest *petition* for mercy; and you will find that our King will abundantly pardon. He will receive you very graciously, and will forgive all your rebellions, and restore you to your former rights of citizenship. But I must further tell you, that if you despise this his royal proclamation, if you reject the mediation of the Prince, and if you continue in your rebellions, there is every reason to fear you will be destroyed by his power, as your guilt will be very much aggravated; and your end will then be according to your rebellious deeds!_

Query. *Which address of these two most resembles the manner in which Christ and the apostles preached the gospel?*

Mr. John Brine succeeded Mr. Skepp in Currier_s Hall, about the year 1730. He was a minister of strong mind and laborious habits. His manner of preaching fully accorded with that of his predecessor, as he contented himself with what he considered clear statements of doctrinal truth, without making any application of his subjects.

1730: Rise of the Modern Question.

In his time the Modern Question *

(* I do not know when the modern question began to be so called; but it was probably in a pamphlet written by Mr. Maurice of Rowell, perhaps about 1735, entitled, _A Modern Question modestly stated._ To this appeared an answer, written by Mr. Lewis Wayman of Kimbolton, an Independent minister almost idolized by the Baptists, entitled, _A further Inquiry after Truth._ Dr. Abraham

Taylor seems to have noticed this last with disapprobation, if not to have written against it, in his *_Address to Young Students of Divinity, by way of Caution against some Paradoxes in Divinity, which lead to doctrinal Antinomianism.* And afterwards Mr. Maurice wrote and published *_The Modern Question affirmed and proved,* May 5, 1739, with a recommendation by Mr. Thomas Bradbury, and a testimony on the same side by fifty-two members of his church, dated Aug. 31, 1737. Dr. Gill also answered the same publication of Dr. Taylor's, in a pamphlet entitled, *_The Necessity of Good Works unto Salvation considered; occasioned by some Reflections and Misrepresentations of Dr. Taylor, in a pamphlet of his lately published, called an Address to Young Students in Divinity &c.* It is probable Mr. Hissey was the first person who maintained the negative side of the question. Mr. Wayman answered both Dr. Taylor, and Mr. Maurice's Second Book, in *_A Defence of the further Inquiry after Truth, &c.* 1739.)

became a subject of controversy among the Baptists. About 1740 a Mr. Gutteridge, a Baptist of Oundle, wrote a piece to prove, *_that it was the duty of all men to whom the gospel was preached to repent and believe in Christ.* In this work, it is supposed there were some things really verging towards Arminianism.

1749: *Liberality of Mr. John Brine.*

Mr. Brine, in 1743, addressed a letter to a friend, which he published, entitled, *_The Arminian Principles of a late Writer refuted.* Though Mr. Brine denied the position above mentioned, yet he repeatedly allows, what no man of reading could dispute, that many sound Calvinists had embraced it,—and says to his friend, concerning Mr.

Gutteridge, *_Had not this writer attempted to build up Arminianism upon the foundation of the opinion of evangelical repentance and saving faith, being the duties of unregenerate men, I had not given you and the world this trouble; for though I apprehend that that opinion is not to be supported by Scripture and the analogy of faith, it seems not to me to be of such consequence, but that persons differing in this point, may fully agree about the doctrines of the grace of God.*

In 1752, another pamphlet was published on the affirmative side, by Mr. Alvey Jackson, a Baptist minister, in Yorkshire. This piece was edited by Dr. Joseph Stennett; and Mr. Brine made some animadversions upon it, in his *_Motives to Love and Unity among Calvinists differing in opinion.* Mr. Johnson of Liverpool, a Baptist of peculiar notions, published on the negative side, in reply to Mr. Jackson; but he carried matters to such an extravagant length, that Mr. Brine wrote again to *_note and rectify the mistakes* of Mr. Johnson. *

(* *Memoirs of the late Rev. Andrew Fuller*, by Dr. John Ryland, p. 8, 9.)

Though Mr. Brine was free from the censoriousness of his predecessor, Mr. Skepp, yet he certainly preached upon the same *non-application, non-invitation* scheme. Even in sermons where the subjects, it might have been expected, would have led him to address the unconverted, on the necessity of repentance and faith, there is not a syllable addressed to them on any topic. The reader is referred to that entitled, *_The chief of Sinners saved through Jesus Christ,* from 1 Tim. 1:15, preached in 1747; and to another entitled, *_The Glory of the Gospel considered,* from 1 Tim. 1:12, preached in 1762.

1749: *Sentiments of Dr. John Gill.*

Contemporary with Mr. Brine was that powerful and laborious writer, Dr. John Gill. For upwards of fifty years this eminent minister filled a public situation as the pastor of a respectable church in London; and for thirty years of that time he was one of the senior, and the presiding minister in all affairs relating to the denomination. He had a very high opinion of Mr. John Skepp, from whom he had derived some literary advantages, and whose work on Divine energy he reprinted in 1754, when the Doctor's recommendation was considered almost oracular among the Baptists. He had a strong personal affection, too, for Mr. John Brine, whose spiritual father he had been at the early part of his ministry.

Dr. Gill did not write so strongly, perhaps, as Mr. Brine, upon what I consider the false Calvinistic scheme, though he was very zealous for the doctrine of justification before faith. Considering that what God had willed to perform, was actually performed, he thought that God's decree to justify the elect, whom he had chosen in Christ, was their actual justification; and from hence it probably followed, as a necessary consequence, that he could not address the ungodly and unconverted, as being at that time without Christ. Whether this was the necessary result of his principles or not, it is certain he adopted the non-invitation scheme, and could preach whole sermons without saying, *But now God hath commanded all men every where to repent*. He never said to a wicked man, while his heart was set upon the gratification of his wicked passions, *—Repent, therefore, of this thy wickedness, and pray God, if perhaps the thoughts of thy heart may be forgiven thee. For I perceive that thou art in the gall of bitterness, and in the bond of iniquity*, Acts 8:22, 23. It appears, that neither the Doctor, nor his brethren, Messrs. Skepp or Brine, had so learned Christ as Paul and Peter had understood him.

Though Dr. Gill never professedly wrote against the affirmative side of the Modern Question; yea, though some things he wrote were considered as favouring the views of those who supported it; yet as it was well known that he thought with Mr. Brine upon that subject, it naturally followed that their opinion produced a very powerful influence among the Baptist Ministers, and gave the tone to their preaching. And though the controversy was not much known among the people, yet, as a judicious and aged minister has well observed, *—the preachers were too much restrained from imitating our Lord and his apostles, in calling on sinners to repent and believe the gospel*. Many of these ministers, indeed, endeavored to address the consciences of men, as far as their system would allow; and some of them could hardly refrain from expressing themselves inconsistently with their creed. They were aware that the divine law requires such obedience as no bad man will yield to it; but, though they considered all mankind as bound to love God supremely, they supposed that the faith connected with salvation could not be duty because Adam, as they thought, had not power (that is, occasion or opportunity) of believing in Christ. _ *

(* Dr. Ryland's *Memoirs of Mr. Fuller*, p. 8, 9. The Doctor adds in a note on this part, *—Yet Dr. Gill gives up this chief argument of Mr. Brine, in his Cause of God and Truth*, p. 3, and p. 81, and says, *—That Adam, in a state of innocence, had a power of believing in Christ, and did believe in him as the second person in the trinity, as the Son of God, cannot well be denied; since, with the other two persons, he was his Creator and Preserver, the knowledge of which cannot well be thought to have been withheld from him: and his not believing in him as the Mediator, Saviour, and Redeemer, did not arise from any defect of power in him,*

but from the state, condition, and situation in which he was, and from the nature of the revelation made to him!___)

Though, as I have intimated, the manner in which Dr. Gill preached to sinners must have given the tone to that of some of our ministers, yet there were others, yea many, both in London and the country, who continued to *warn every man, and teach every man, in all wisdom, that they might present every man perfect in Christ Jesus.*

Of Dr. Gill's manner of preaching, the following specimens extracted from one of the best of his printed sermons, the funeral sermon for Mr. Samuel Wilson, preached in 1750, third edition, from Acts 20:28. _The doctrines the apostle chiefly insisted upon, during the whole of his ministry, were reducible to these two heads—*repentance towards God, and faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ.* God, against whom man has sinned, is the object of the one; and Christ, who is the Redeemer and Saviour, is the object of the other. Repentance must be towards God; it lies in a true sense of sin, and godly sorrow for it; in shame and blushing at it; and in owning and forsaking it; flowing from a view of the love of God, and of pardoning grace and mercy through Christ; attended with faith in him, and expecting grace and life, and salvation, by him. Faith has Christ for its object; and it is a believing in his person, blood, righteousness, and sacrifice; a looking to him, leaning on him, trusting in him, and expecting life and salvation from him. These two doctrines went together in Christ's ministry, and are what he ordered his disciples to teach, and which they did; endeavoring first to bring men to a sense of sin, and then encouraging them to believe in Christ. And this is the usual order of the Spirit's work upon the soul, through the ministry of the word; first to convince men of sin; then to work faith in their hearts, and take of the things of Christ, and show and apply them to their souls for their peace and comfort. And those doctrines were taught by the apostle, without respect to persons;—he *testified* them both to the *Jews and Greeks.*—Now this is certainly a correct statement of evangelical repentance and saving faith; but then there is no application of these sentiments so as to convince guilty sinners that except they repent they must perish; and that they cannot escape wrath if they continue to neglect so great a salvation.

1748: Baptist Monthly Meetings.

It is not known at what precise period the Monthly Meetings of the London Associated Baptist Churches commenced. Crosby speaks of them as having been discontinued, when he wrote his fourth volume, in 1739. It seems however probable, that they were held soon after that period, as I find a minute dated June 21, 1748, of which the following is a copy:— _At a meeting of the Ministers and Deputies of the Particular Baptist Churches, held by adjournment at Blackwell's Coffee-house;—the minutes of the last meeting being read, the question was put,—whether there was due encouragement to continue the monthly meeting of prayer and preaching? Which being carried in the affirmative, it was resolved, That a list be now settled of the said meetings for the ensuing twelve months, at the following places, _ This list is a curiosity, it being the first which has been preserved.

*

(* The Baptist Monthly Meetings have been regularly continued, with but few interruptions, from that period. They have doubtless been productive of good to the denomination, as they have promoted that familiar intercourse between the ministers and the principal members of the churches, which, in so large a city, they would not otherwise have enjoyed. It is hoped the Association will never be dissolved; and that successive ministers and deacons will manifest an ardent zeal

to emulate their predecessors in these monthly meetings. The writer feels it humiliating to add, that five of the churches thus associated in 1748 have been dissolved. The seven that remain in the monthly meeting at the present time, are those marked with an asterisk.)

LIST OF BAPTIST MONTHLY MEETINGS

Time	Place.	To begin.	To preach.	To pray.	To conclude.
1748 July	Mr. Biddle_s, Deptford.	Mr. Townsend	Mr. Spurrier	Mr. Stennett	Mr. Biddle
August	Mr. Spurrier_s Lime-house.	Mr. Dew	Dr. Gill	Mr. Wilson	Mr. Spurrier
Sept.	Mr. Dew_s, Great East- cheap.	Mr. Braith- waite	Mr. Stennett	Mr. Anderson	Mr. Dew
Oct.	*Mr. Stennett_s Little Wild- street.	Mr. Thompson	Mr. Wallin	Mr. Spurrier	Mr. Stennett.
Nov.	*Mr. Townsend_s, (Sabbatarian,) Curriers_- hall.	Dr. Gill	Mr. Thompson	Mr. Dew	Mr. Townsend
Dec.	*Mr. Braithwaites, Devonshire- square.	Mr. Wilson	Mr. Dew	Mr. Townsend	Mr. Braith- waite
1749 Jan.	Mr. Brine_s, Curriers_-hall	Mr. Spurrier	Mr. Anderson	Mr. Thompson	Mr. Brine
Feb.	*Mr. Thompson_s, Unicorn-yard	Mr. Brine	Mr. Townsend	Dr. Gill	Mr. Thompson
March	*Mr. Anderson_s Swallow- street.	Mr. Stennett	Mr. Wilson	Mr. Brine	Mr. Anderson
April	*Dr. Gill_s, Goat-yard.	Mr. Anderson	Mr. Brine	Mr. Wallin	Dr. Gill
May	*Mr. Wilson_s, Prescot-street	Mr. Townsend	Mr. Braith- waite	Mr. Dew	Mr. Wilson
June	Late Mr. Dawkes_s	Mr. Thompson	Mr. Wallin	Mr. Stennett	Mr. Spurrier

1750: State of our Churches.

It appears that the General Baptists had continued to hold their Associations both in London and the country. The only meeting of which any account is preserved, was held in London at Whitsuntide 1739 *

(* Crosby, vol. iv. p. 14.)

Mr. John Maulden preached on the occasion, and received the thanks of the assembly for his appropriate discourse, and was requested to print it. The proceedings and deliberations were conducted with great unity, peace, and concord. Mr. Maulden was elected to the office of a messenger of the baptized churches. *

(* This office was that of a *superintendent* over the churches of a particular district. It answered to that of superintendent in the Lutheran churches. There were a few instances of persons filling such a station at the early part of the history of the Particular Baptists; but it was soon disused.)

1750: State of our Churches.

The state of our churches in 1750 may be judged of in some measure from the following statement of Dr. Gill:— ‘The harvest,’ says he, ‘is great, and faithful and painful ministers are few. There are scarcely any that naturally care for the estate and souls of men, and who are heartily concerned for their spiritual welfare: all comparatively seek their own things, their honour and applause from men, their ease; reputation, and riches; and none or few the things that are Jesus Christ_s, or which relate to his honour, glory, kingdom, and interest in the world. And what adds to the sorrow is, that there are so few rising to fill the places of those that are removed; few that come forth with the same spirit, and are zealously attached to the truths of the everlasting gospel. Blessed be God, there is here and there one that promises usefulness, or otherwise the sorrow and grief at the loss of gospel ministers would be insupportable.’ He adds, ‘that very few ministers were zealously attached to the truths of the gospel; that errors and heresies of all kinds were rampant; that erroneous ministers did not, as formerly, _privily bring in damnable heresies, denying the Lord that bought them, but openly spread their poison, and propagated their wretched schemes with fury and rancour, charitably scattering fire-brands, arrows, and death; that there was scarcely an error or heresy that had appeared in the world from the first ages of Christianity, but what was revived, and no truth of the gospel but what was opposed and denied.’ *

(* Sermon for Mr. Samuel Wilson, p. 34.)

1750: Mr. Ryland_s List of Churches.

Mr. John Ryland, who was at this time pastor of the church at Warwick, wrote, in the year 1753, an account of the Baptist churches in London, with a statement of the members in round numbers. From having lived in London, and been in communion with Mr. Brine_s church, he may be supposed to have formed a tolerably correct judgment respecting the churches he has mentioned. The account is as follows:—

_December 27, 1753.

<i>Pastors</i>	<i>Place.</i>	<i>No. of Members.</i>
Mr. GILL,	Goat-street	150

---BRINE	Curriers_-hall	30
---STENNETT	Little Wild-street	60
---WALLIN	Maze-pond	100
---ANDERSON,	Swallow-street	60
---DEW,	Great Eastcheap	40
---STEPHENS	Devonshire-square	150
---TOWNSEND,	Curriers_-hall, Sabbatarian	20
There were some other churches not mentioned by Mr. Ryland, at this period, viz.		
DR. GIFFORD,	Eagle-street, probably	150
Late MR. WILSON,	Prescot-street	150
---MR. THOMPSON	Unicorn-yard	60
The aggregate calculation of Mr. Ryland, of all the churches, was as follows:—		
In London 9 churches, averaged at 50 each		450
East and south of London, 24 churches, at 40		960
In the West, 18 churches, at 40		720
In South Wales, 20 churches, at 40		800
In North Wales, no Baptists		
In the North of England, 50 churches, at 40		2000

4930

1750: Decline of the Baptist Denomination.

Now, even admitting that this calculation was one-third deficient in number, and adding two-thirds more for hearers, who were not members, there could not have been 20,000 persons in all the Particular Baptist congregations in England and Wales. The General Baptists are not included; but their churches at that time were but few in number, and their congregations small and languishing.

There is no reason to doubt that our churches were far more prosperous and numerous at the Revolution in 1688, than at this period, sixty-five years afterwards; so that prosperity had indeed slain more than the sword.

It will not be difficult, perhaps, in the history of our London churches particularly, to ascertain some of the causes of this lamentable and obvious decline in the numbers of our denomination, notwithstanding liberty of conscience had been enjoyed in the most extensive way. Surely God must have had a controversy with the churches, so that *their sins had kept good things from them*. For the Lord has said, to vindicate the justice of his proceedings towards his church, *Behold the Lord's hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither his ear heavy, that it cannot hear: but your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear*, Isa. 59:1, 2.

1750: Reasons of the Declension of the Dissenting Churches.

It is a remarkable fact, and should be improved by all the ministers of the gospel, that while the leading men in the Baptist denomination had been preaching what Mr. Delaune calls _the hidden decrees of God, to the neglect of applying _practical hidden duties to the hearts of their hearers;_ while they were contending most earnestly that there were an

elect people, whom God would save through sanctification of the Spirit, and the belief of the truth, but without using the appointed means for bringing the sheep of Christ into his fold, by going after the strayed and the lost, and without enduring any thing for the elect's sake, that they might obtain the salvation which was in Christ Jesus with eternal glory; God was carrying on his own work, fulfilling his purposes of grace and mercy, accomplishing the number of the elect, and advancing his kingdom; and that by means which these good men thought unnecessary, by instruments whom they thought but babes in the knowledge of the mysteries of Christ, by the influence of principles they considered to be erroneous, and by a kind of preaching which they called an _Arminian dialect._ And _Semi-pelagian addresses._ The reflecting reader will anticipate, that I allude to that astonishing man, that laborious and successful minister of Christ, George Whitefield, and his contemporaries. *

(* Mr. Whitefield preached his first sermon in Moorfields, April 29, 1739, having preached in the open air on Hannam Mount, near Bristol, about two months before; and he continued his popular and useful career until Lord's Day, Sep. 30, 1779, when he fell asleep in Jesus at Newbury Port, in New England.)

Covered with obloquy, and loaded with reproach; sneered at by the profane, and discouraged by many even of the pious; unknown by his mother's own children, and treated with coolness and neglect by some of his brethren in Christ; cast out by the Established Church, and scarcely admitted into the pulpits of Dissenters; he endured the pelting of at least half an age. But this minister, whose faithful evangelical appeals to the consciences of unconverted sinners (calling upon them without any fettered restrictions to come to Christ for pardon, for sanctification, and for eternal life) were despised by men, God highly honoured. It was evident that *he so spake that the people believed, God giving testimony to the word of his grace.* And it is probable, but for the rise of such a preacher as Whitefield, both as to his principles, spirit, and manner of address, just at that period, that infidelity would, in this country, have triumphed over Christianity. What with the anti-evangelical and moral discourses which prevailed among the principal Presbyterian ministers, the stiff regard to precision of discipline among the Independents, and the cold, dry, uninteresting, doctrinal statements of the leading Baptists, had not God raised up the Methodists, man of another character from each, and uniting the excellencies of all of them, the rapid decline of the churches must have gone on with an accelerated motion. The churches of regular Dissenters, after a few years, received large accessions to their numbers from the converts of Whitefield, and not a few of their subsequent ministers had been awakened to a sense of sin, and had been led to embrace the Saviour, under the ministry of that wonderful man. Another spirit—a spirit of zeal and of love united with a *sound* mind—began to be felt and manifested. The people could not rest satisfied with dry speculative discussions of controversial divinity; and a great number of ministers preached the same sentiments, though not with equal ardour, as Whitefield and his _band of men whose hearts God had touched._

1750: Injustice of the Test and Corporation Acts.

It was not the kind of preaching only which I have censured, that had tended to produce this decline in our churches, but the worldly spirit that prevailed among the upper classes of Dissenters. To be zealous to obtain the rights of citizenship, and to reject with indignation the implied obloquy that they were not fit persons to be trusted with the exercise of power in the state, was worthy the character of the descendants of those by

whom Hume is constrained to acknowledge _the expiring spark of civil liberty had been kept alive, and all the blessings of the constitution had been procured._ But that the repeal of the Test laws should be pursued with such ardour as if it were the one thing needful, and as if the churches of Dissenters needed the auxiliary help of the pomp and state of magistracy, was certainly overrating both the degradation which exclusion from civil offices unjustly inflicts, and the advantages which the possession of them would confer. I consider it to have been a merciful disappointment of their wishes and exertions, that the prayer of their petition was not heard. Civil distinctions are dangerous snares to Christians under any circumstance, and have proved so even at the most prosperous state of the church. What then would they have been at a time when even the things that remained appeared ready to die? The writer is no apologist for exclusive enactments, by which one party unjustly monopolizes the power and immunities of the state to the disadvantage of another. He believes that, as the Dissenters acknowledge no supreme head in ecclesiastical matters, and most cordially and loyally serve and obey the King in all civil matters, they ought to be eligible to all civil offices, in common with all other subjects; but then he also believes, that God has overruled injustice as to worldly distinctions for the spiritual good and prosperity of their churches. And he feels no difficulty in expressing his own opinion, that, but for the profanation of the Lord's supper in the existing Test, he should consider it the duty of Dissenters to submit quietly to exclusions from power and distinction in the state, as a trifling thing which they are called to suffer for conscience sake; but while that abomination exists, they should unite in renewed applications to the legislature for the repeal of the Test and Corporations Acts, as a measure which the honour of the Established Church, as well as the rights of Dissenters, imperiously demands.

The Baptist London Fund, established in the last reign, had now begun to produce a happy influence upon the state of the denomination, in affording pecuniary assistance to those ministers whose churches could not support them. Many young ministers, too, had received literary help, principally at Bristol, under the care of Messrs. Fosket and Evans; and by these united means, the _coal that was left_ was in many places kept from being entirely _quenched._ _The Lord's portion, which is _his people,_ was still found in our churches; and they were _as an oak, whose substance is in it,_ even when it _casts its leaves._ _The holy seed_ continued, when the denomination was scorched with summer heats or chilled by wintry frosts. Evangelical principles were thus maintained; a holy discipline was in some good degree preserved; some pious people were constantly added to the churches; and God heard their fervent and united prayers, presented in the name of the Lord Jesus, saying, *_Let the priests, the ministers of the Lord, weep between the porch and the altar, and let them say, Spare thy people, O Lord, and give not thine heritage to reproach, that the heathen should rule over them. Wherefore should they say among the people, Where is their God?_*

1750: The Sheriff's Cause.

It was during this reign, that an event important to protestant Dissenters took place in London, in relation to their liability to serve the office of Sheriff. The question was first started in the year 1742, when the Committee of Deputies encouraged Mr. Robert Grosvenor, who scrupled to take the sacrament according to the Church of England, as the required qualification, to refuse serving the Sheriff's office. They were of opinion that the Corporation Act, which requires the qualification, was an effectual bar to his

election; and that the Toleration Act would protect him from the penalties, if he refused to qualify.

The city of London having attempted ineffectually to recover the fines from Mr. Grosvenor, and finding that even their bye-laws could not reach the Dissenters, in the year 1748 made a new law, with a view, as they alleged, of procuring fit and able persons to serve the office of Sheriff; whereby they imposed a fine of four hundred pounds and twenty marks upon every person, who, being nominated by the Lord Mayor, should decline standing the election at the Common Hall; and six hundred pounds upon every one, who, being elected by the Common Hall, should refuse to serve the office. The fines were expressly appropriated towards fraying the expense of building the Mansion House; and above fifteen thousand pounds were thus obtained from conscientious Dissenters.

In 1754, three Dissenters (Messrs. Stratfield, Sheafe, and Evans*)

(* Allen Evans, Esq. was at this time a member and a deacon of the church in Little Wild-street, under the care of the Rev. Dr. Joseph Stennett. At the close of the year 1756 he left that church, and joined the Baptist church in Barbican, under the care of the Rev. Joseph Burroughs.)

were elected to this office. The Committee of Deputies, of which the last mentioned, Allen Evans, Esq. had long been an active member, encouraged them to refuse serving, as it was thought the legality of the city bye-law could not be supported.

This question was tried in September 1759, in the Sheriff's court and court of hustings, and was decided in favour of the city. But in July 1762, the Judges determined, after counsel had been heard for the defendants several days, that the former judgment must be reversed.

The Corporation, however, as their last resort, brought the question, by writ of error, before the House of Lords. Mr. Sheafe, and Mr. Stratfield, having died before this, the cause was between Sir Thomas Harrison, Knt. Chamberlain of the city of London, and Allen Evans, Esq. On the 21st and 22^d of January, 1767, this cause was argued at the bar of the House of Lords, by Mr. York, and Sir Fletcher Norton, for the plaintiff, and Mr. Attorney General DeGrey, and Mr. Solicitor General Willes, for the defendant. Lord Mansfield, the Chancellor, then observed to their Lordships, that he knew no difference between a person's being elected, and being duly elected; and that no person who had not taken the sacrament according to the rites of the Church of England within twelve months before, was eligible to a corporation office, whatever might be his motive. He said he was desirous, however, that their lordships might draw the line between the *bona fide* Dissenter, and the occasional conformist, the infidel, and the profligate; and that it might be so determined in their journals, as to prevent all future application to parliament, either from corporations or *bona fide* Dissenters. He would therefore propose, with their lordship's leave, the following question to be put to the judges; viz. _Whether, upon the facts admitted by the pleadings in this cause, the defendant is at liberty, or should be allowed, to object to the validity of his election, on account of his having not taken the sacrament according to the rites of the Church of England within a year before, in bar of this action._ On the 3^d and 4th of February, all the Judges to whom it was referred, excepting one, gave it as their full and clear opinion, _That the defendant is at liberty, and should be allowed, to object to the validity of his election, on account of his not having taken the sacrament according to the rites of the Church of England, within a year before, in bar of this action._ It was on this occasion that Lord Mansfield obtained for himself

immortal honour, by delivering that nervous and eloquent speech, which is published as an appendix to the admirable letters of Dr. Philip Furnaux to Mr. Justice Blackstone. _It is now, _ said his lordship, _no crime for a man to say he is a Dissenter; nor is it a crime for him not to take the sacrament according to the rites of the Church of England: nay, the crime is if he does it contrary to the dictates of his conscience._ His lordship then exposed the principles upon which the prosecution was conducted. _This bye-law, by which the Dissenters are to be reduced to this wretched dilemma, [to render themselves obnoxious to penalties whether they serve the office, or refuse to serve it,] is a bye-law of the city, a local corporation, contrary to an act of parliament, which is the law of the land; a modern bye-law, of very modern date, made long since the Corporation Act, long since the Toleration Act, in the face of them, for they knew these laws were in being. It was made in the same year of the reign of the late King, [George II;] I forget which, but it was made about the time of building the Mansion House! In the cause before your lordships, the defendant was by law incapable at the time of his pretended election; and it is my firm persuasion, that he was chosen because he was incapable. If he had been capable, he had not been chosen; for they did not want him to serve the office. They chose him, because, without a breach of the law, and a usurpation on the crown, he could not serve the office. They chose him, that he might fall under the penalty of their bye-law, made to serve a particular purpose; in opposition to which, and to avoid the fine thereby imposed, he has pleaded a legal disability, grounded on two acts of parliament. As I am of opinion that his plea is good, I conclude with moving your lordships, that the judgment be affirmed._ This was accordingly done, and the judgment entered on the journals, February 4, 1767; and by this decision a question affecting the liberty and property of Dissenters was set for ever at rest.

At a General Meeting of the Deputies, on the 11th of March 1767, the chairman, Dr. Benjamin Avery, delivered an address in reference to what he called their recent triumph; in which he observed their obligation to the favour of providence in lengthening out the dying life of the defendant, just far enough to sustain the cause till it was judicially determined. Mr. Evans, it appears, who was now in his 82d year, was so reduced that his life was very precarious. It was considered to be an object of such importance to the Dissenters, that numerous inquiries were continually made at his house respecting the state of his health. It is scarcely possible to conceive of a scene more interesting than that brought before us by the following statement. The intrepid old man, who had firmly stood this contest for upwards of thirteen years, and had endured all the perplexity connected with such a vexatious course of proceeding, and doubtless had felt extremely anxious to hear of its successful termination, was at length gratified by that information. _He was sufficiently sensible, when the cause was determined, to receive the information, and to express with a faint smile, and faltering accents, the satisfaction it afforded him in the immediate prospect of death._ The account concluded with stating, _He was a man of considerable opulence, and great respectability, and had been several years a member of the Committee of Deputies._ *

(* *A sketch of the history and proceedings of the Dissenters, &c.* p. 25-39.)

The importance of the Society of Deputies, and of the labours of their Committee, cannot be too highly estimated; and while the SHERIFF'S CAUSE is recollected as the triumph of law over cunning and malignity, the name of ALLEN EVANS, as a consistent and

intrepid Dissenter, and an upright and conscientious Christian, cannot be forgotten as an example

worthy of the imitation of protestant Dissenters. *

(* Though the period of this *decision* is beyond that to which the limits of the present volume extends, yet the author thought it desirable to give the whole case rather than divide it.)

1750: *The Society for Religious Knowledge.*

The Society for promoting religious Knowledge among the Poor was formed by persons of the Three Denominations of Dissenters, in the year 1750. It is said to have originated in the alarms which the inhabitants of London had felt from two shocks of earthquakes. These were at the beginning of this year, and only five weeks from each other; so that their consternation arose to the highest pitch, and they were filled with the most painful apprehensions. The founder of this excellent institution was Mr. Benjamin Forfitt, a caneman in Leadenhall-street, and a member of the church now under the care of the Rev. John Clayton, at the Weigh House. The first meeting of the society was held in the vestry of Haberdashers_ Hall, August 8, 1750. The views and feelings of those who first engaged in the design may be judged of from the preface to the rules when they were first circulated. _As these considerations will, without doubt,_ say they, _recommend the attempt of the ministers and gentlemen who have entered into the design, to the approbation of all good men; so it is to be hoped, especially as it is wholly void of all party views, that they will engage many of every Christian denomination among us, who truly fear God, love the protestant religion and liberties, and wish well to immortal souls, to countenance, encourage, and promote it,_

Of the four ministers who first patronized this excellent plan, two were of the Baptist denomination, Dr. Joseph Stennett, and Mr. Josiah Thompson. The former of these preached the annual sermon for the society in the year 1753, at Haberdashers_ Hall, and published it at their request, under the title of _The Importance of Religious Knowledge._ The following extract will exhibit the ardour with which these worthy men entered into the noble design of circulating Bibles, Testaments, and evangelical publications, among the poor. Dr. Stennett, in concluding his discourse, says, _The doctrine which you have heard, the value of immortal souls, the importance of sacred knowledge, and the advantageous opportunity which such days of liberty afford us of propagating it, all conspire to recommend that good design which was the occasion of our present meeting. Notwithstanding the many just complaints we have to make of the sins of the times in which we live, it must be acknowledged, that a generous readiness to encourage public charity has, of late years, prevailed among our people, especially in this great metropolis, beyond any thing our ancestors could boast of. Many useful and noble endowments have been established, and are every day more and more encouraged, for the relief of the poor under the various calamities of human life. But as the immortal is of infinitely more importance than the outward estate, the prosperity and salvation of the souls of men than the health of the bodies, and the concerns of eternity than those of time; so every serious mind will acknowledge, that what I have to recommend deserves the most favourable regard. There are, indeed, other excellent designs of this sort, which have met with very deserved encouragement, (especially that set on foot by *the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge,*) and we are very much indebted to the bounty of the late pious and noble Philip Lord Wharton, for the distribution of Scripture knowledge among our poor

in this way. But still there is great room for more; and when the plan of this charity is duly considered, I believe it will appear to answer the ends of spreading Christian instruction as well, at least, as any of that kind. It was begun upon the bounty of one single hand; and when the demands exceeded the small funds by which it was supported, which was very soon the case, the help of others was called in. The beginning of this Institution was very small. The annual subscriptions and other contributions, received in the first year amounted to the sum of 114*l.* 13*s.* 3*d.* and they expended in Bibles, Testaments, and other books, 100*l.* 11*s.* 1*d.* The first donation of books was sent to the excellent Dr. Doddridge of Northampton, and consisted of six large, and six small Bibles, two dozen of the Assemblies catechism, (one dozen bound,) one dozen of Dr. Watts whole set of catechisms, and two dozen second set. The letter sent by this worthy minister, acknowledging the bounty, affords proof how grateful the exhibitions of the Society were, and how much good it was expected would follow from its labours; expectations, which the well conducted plans of this admirable institution, for more than seventy years, have fully realized, and abundantly confirmed. *

(* Sermons before the Society, by Dr. Gibbons in 1752, Dr. Stennett in 1754, Dr. Rippon in 1783.)

1752: Usefulness of the Methodists.

The most pleasing event of a religious nature, which took place in this reign, was the rise of the Methodists. The ministry of Mr. Whitefield, and its blessed effects upon the state of our churches, has been already noticed; nor would it be right not to mention his zealous contemporary, Mr. John Wesley—a man animated by the same holy spirit of burning apostolic zeal; though, in the opinion of the writer, very far inferior to his early co-adjutor, as to the extent of his talents, and as to the correctness of his religious sentiments. It is a little singular that one of Mr. Wesley's first chapels in London had been built and occupied by Baptists. Mr. Wesley, in his journal for the year 1743, thus mentions this circumstance:— _August 6. A convenient chapel was offered me in Snow-s-fields, on the other side the water. It was built on purpose, it seems, by a poor Arian misbeliever, for the defence and propagation of her faith. But the wisdom of God brought that device to nought, and ordered, by his over-ruling providence, that it should be employed, not for crucifying the Son of God afresh, but for calling all to believe in his name._

The Arminian sentiments of Mr. Wesley prevented any connection between him and our ministers, who were in general zealous Calvinists. Dr. Gill indeed appeared as an opposer of Mr. Wesley's tenets; for in 1752 the Doctor wrote, in answer to Mr. Wesley, a defence of predestination and final perseverance. Polemical writing was the fashion of the age, and this was generally accompanied by no inconsiderable share of bitter asperity. It cannot, however, be denied but that Mr. Wesley had used very unguarded expressions respecting some very important doctrines of Christianity, which demanded censure, and which those who were set for the defence of the gospel were called upon to answer and expose. But if the character of this minister of Christ be judged by his abundant labours, his disinterested services, and the success with which God was pleased to render them effectual to the conversion of sinners, and to revive the languishing state of the Christian churches of that period, the influence of which is felt to the present day; it must be acknowledged that he, as well as Mr. Whitefield, was a most extraordinary man: they will

be reckoned amongst the eminent reformers of the church, and their names be held in everlasting remembrance.

It is to the honour of the government of this period, that the persecutions which the Methodists were exposed to, from _lewd fellows of the baser sort,_ were not promoted or sanctioned by any acts of the legislature, though it should seem that many magistrates were strongly inclined to encourage such proceedings. The well known hostility of the King to persecution for the sake of conscience, doubtless restrained _those who were sent by him,_ from joining the ranks of the opposers of methodism, though it did not in all cases teach them to be a _terror to evil-doers,_ and a _praise to them that did will._

1760: Death and Character of the King.

The King died October 25, 1760, in the 77th year of his age, and the 34th of his reign; the Privy Council, in announcing his death, says, _Beloved, honoured, and regretted by his subjects, for his eminent and royal virtues._

In his conduct towards protestant Dissenters, he had sacredly observed the pledge given by him on his accession to the throne, and had _maintained the toleration inviolable._

The sentiments and feeling of the Baptists on his loss, may be judged of by the following extracts from a sermon preached at Little Wild-street, November 2, 1760, by Mr.

(afterwards Dr.) Samuel Stennett. It is founded upon I Chron. 29:27, 28—*Thirty-three years reigned he in Jerusalem; and he died in a good old age, full of days, riches, and honour.* _That which completes his character, and adds the highest lustre to it, is the religious regard he has ever paid to the influence of heaven in all his affairs. The protestant succession in his illustrious house, was an event in which the hand of providence signally appeared; nor did he fail to express his sense of this, when it first took effect in the peaceable accession of his royal father to the crown and dignity of these realms. During the several vicissitudes of his reign, we have seen him publicly implore the direction and blessing of Almighty God; and when the victory has declared itself on his side, we have heard him, with great reverence and gratitude, ascribe praise to the same God, saying, in the language of David, whom he imitated in this as well as in his other virtues, *I will not trust in my bow, neither shall my sword save me: but thou hast saved us from our enemies, and hast put them to shame that hate us.*

Happy Prince! Thus raised up by God, to humble the pride and restrain the power of haughty tyrants; to assist his oppressed neighbours against the violent attempts of *popish* enemies; and, like a tender father, to guard the liberties and promote the interests, of a dutiful and affectionate people. May his name ever live, not in the records of history only, but in the hearts of all those who have felt the blessings of his just, mild, and gracious administration.

VOLUME III.

BOOK. II.

The churches in the metropolis have been incidentally mentioned in the general history of the Denomination, already given: the history of each church will now be narrated, so far as I have obtained materials for that purpose. The arrangement will be according to their respective dates; and their separate histories will be traced, either till their dissolution, or to the period of 1760.

BROAD STREET, OLD GRAVEL-LANE, WAPPING

The origin of this church has been published in vol. i. p. 138, 139, as the first of the Particular, or Calvinistic, Baptist churches in London. The people who established it had been members of the Independent church, under Mr. John Lathorp. _In that society,_ it is said, _several persons, finding that the congregation kept not to its first principles of separation, and being also convinced that baptism was not to be administered to infants, but to such as professed faith in Christ, desired that they might be dismissed from that communion, and allowed to form a distinct congregation in such order as was most agreeable to their own sentiments._

1633: Old Gravel-lane, Wapping.

The church, considering that they were now grown very numerous, and so more than could in those times of persecution conveniently meet together, and believing also that those persons acted from a principle of conscience, and not from obstinacy, agreed to allow them the liberty they desired, and that they should be constituted a distinct church; which was performed, September 12, 1633.

This is a very interesting statement; and, as it rests upon the authority of that eminent minister, Mr. William Kiffin, it may doubtless be depended upon as correct. It is equally creditable to both parties; to those who desired a separation upon conscientious principles, and to those who granted it; herein they bore testimony to the truth and sincerity of their professions. After being regularly constituted in a separate church state, we are informed by Mr. Kiffin, that, as they believed baptism was not rightly administered to infants, so they looked upon the baptism which they had received, at that age, as invalid, whereupon most or all of them received a new baptism._ From this uncertainty in stating whether some only, or all of them, were baptized upon a personal profession of their faith, it cannot now be known whether this church was composed entirely of baptized persons, though that appears to be the most rational conjecture.

The minister whom they chose as their pastor, in 1633, was Mr. John Spilsbury. But little is known of this minister, except that he was a man of reputation among his brethren. His name appears to the Confession of Faith published by seven churches in London, in 1644.*

(* Vol. i. p. 175.)

In 1652, some persecuted Baptists in Massachusetts colony, wrote a letter addressed, _Unto the well-beloved John Spilsbury, William Kiffin, and to the rest that in London stand fast in the faith, and continue to walk steadfastly in that order of gospel which was once delivered to the saints by Jesus Christ,_ &c. In the next year, 1753, I find Mr. Spilsbury_s name mentioned in Thurloe_s state papers, _as having dealt very homely and plainly with those of that [the fifth monarchy] judgment here,_ [Ireland.] *

(* Vol. i. p. 230.)

In the same year the churches in Ireland sent a letter to the churches in London, addressed to them as _under the care of Messrs. Kiffin, Spilsbury, and others._ It appears probable, from having signed the _Declaration against Venner's Rebellion,_ in 1662, and from his name's not appearing afterwards in any document connected with the history of the tumultuous times which followed, that he was removed by death soon after the restoration, and thus _taken away from the evil to come._ He published a treatise on baptism. Of his colleague, Mr. Samuel Richardson, some account is given in vol. ii. p. 346.

It is likely that the meeting-house at Wapping was erected after the declaration of indulgence by Charles II. 1672 when many of our ministers availed themselves of the privilege of obtaining a licence from the King, that they might be secured from the persecution of the prelates, and be left at liberty to preach the gospel of Christ without interruption. *

(* This Meeting-house is mentioned in Maitland's List of 1639. I understand it was a good-sized place, standing back from the road, with large gates before it, leading to a court-yard. It was taken down a few years since to make way for the London Dock.)

1674: Mr. John Norcott,

Mr. John Norcott appears to have succeeded Mr. Spilsbury as pastor of the church in Gravel-lane. He had probably been a member of the church in Petty-france, the name of _Sister Norcott_ being in the list of its members in 1675. His name is among those of the London pastors, in 1674, subscribed to a public document. *

(* The _Quakers Appeal against Mr. Thomas Hicks._ See vol. i. p. 392.)

He appears to have been a very judicious, popular, and useful minister of the gospel of Christ. _He was,_ says one who had been very intimate with him, _a most sweet and choice preacher. Most excellent skill had he to dive into gospel mysteries. He saw as far into a text of Scripture as most men now surviving, and was as careful in dividing of the word, that every one might have a portion in due season. He sounded the gospel trumpet most sweetly, and excited spiritual joy in the hearts of his hearers. In his prayers for sinners, and in his expostulations with them, his tears and entreaties were adapted to break their adamantine hearts. He was skillful in the word of righteousness; and while he always furnished precious bread for the children of God, he knew how to feed both with milk and strong meat. The place of worship was always thronged with hearers, and he was so intent upon his work that he probably shortened his days by his excessive labours; he loved not his life unto the death._

The church was greatly increased by his labours, as he was an instrument through the word, and by the operation of the Spirit in his ministry, of turning many to righteousness, and thus became a father in Christ, and had many spiritual sons and daughters.

His ministry was but short; but doing with all his might whatever his hand found to do for God, he did much work in a little time. He was a most catholic spirit, loving all the ministers of Christ, and earnestly praying for them. This in some instances was not returned, as his firmness and decision in pleading for the ordinance of believer's baptism made him enemies among his Paedobaptist brethren.

1676: Mr. John Norcott.

This most eminent, laborious, and faithful minister of the gospel fell asleep in the Lord March 24, 1675-6. His funeral sermon was preached the 28th of that month, by the Rev. Benjamin Keach, in Gravel-lane, Wapping. The meeting-house would not contain the numbers who pressed to hear the sermon. Many whom Mr. Keach calls *_able and worthy ministers,* were present on the sorrowful occasion. The text which had been chosen by the deceased, was Ps. 89:48. *_What man is he that liveth and shall not see death? Shall he deliver his soul from the hand of the grave?* Mr. Keach, who styles himself *_a cordial and unfeigned lover of the deceased,* appears to have delivered his sermon under much agitation of mind, and with great grief of heart. He abruptly commences by saying, *_I need not tell you the ground and occasion of this present meeting. Certain I am that this is a sorrowing assembly. Whether I am fit to preach or not, I cannot tell; but sure I am that I am ripe to mourn. May I not on this occasion use the words of David upon Abner's death, 2 Sam.3:38. _Know ye not that there is a prince and a great man fallen this day in Israel? Who more worthy of honour than those God confers honour upon, and who are employed as Christ's ambassadors? To treat in his stead with poor sinners about their eternal estate and condition is no small dignity; and to be deprived of such a one, what greater ground for grief and morning?_*

Mr. Keach published this sermon entitled *_A Summons to the Grave; or the Necessity of a timely Preparation for Death._* It is dedicated *_To all sincere Christians that were the hearers of this sermon; but more especially to that poor, afflicted, and sorrowful congregation, which is in God the Father, and in our Lord Jesus Christ, meeting in Old Gravel-lane, near Wapping, London._*

_He is gone, says Mr. Keach, *_to eat the fruit of his labour; and I wish that all those choice sermons you have heard from his lips may not be buried with him: I hope the fruit of them will be seen in your lives. And could some of them be made public, they might be very serviceable unto the people of God, and others in general. I earnestly desire that the Lord may continue the labourer you have, and send some other in due time amongst you, to the making up of that great loss which at present you sustain; so that sinners may be in the midst of you converted, and true believers strengthened, encouraged, and comforted, and all built up together in love; to the end that you may be found without blemish in the day of Jesus Christ._*

With the sermon are printed two elegies and an acrostic, all in very humble lines, but breathing the warmest affection and highest reverence for the memory of Mr. Norcott. It is not said where he was buried, but the following is the epitaph which was placed on his tomb-stone.

_Here underneath this stone lieth the dust
Of Norcott, till the rising of the just.
His soul to heaven is fled, and there doth stand
With Christ, and all the saints at his right hand.
When upon earth he was, he did not spare
His life for Christ: it was his daily care
To pray and preach, and unto God to crave
That sinners might repent, their souls to save.
His work is done, his glass is run, and we
May all conclude he_s blest to eternitie._

There is another epitaph, written by Mr. Benjamin Keach, which ought to be preserved on account of the respect and affection manifested by that excellent minister towards his departed friend and brother.

_A sweet and godly preacher doth lie here,
Who did his master Jesus love so dear,
And sinner_s souls, that he his strength did spend,
And did thereby, _tis thought, hasten his end.
He brought himself by preaching to the grave,
The precious souls of sinners for to save.
He lies here but asleep, he is not dead;
To God he lives; to Christ his soul is fled:
And e_re a while must he awake again,
And evermore with Christ in glory reign._

Mr. Norcott probably died in middle life, though nothing is said of his age. One of the elegies refers to some opposition which he met with from some Paedobaptists: this

doubtless arose from the work which he published on that subject. The arguments for believers_ baptism are plainly and strongly exhibited, and infant baptism is shewn to be a rite of human invention; but there was nothing in it that could justly give offence to any one. This little book is entitled, _Baptism discovered plainly and faithfully according to the Word of God; wherein is set forth the glorious Pattern of our blessed Saviour Jesus Christ,_ &c. I have not been able to learn when this little work was first written. It is dedicated by the author, _To his beloved friends and brethren in and about Wapping, who love our Lord Jesus in sincerity, children of one Father, and partakers of the glorious Spirit of grace._ It appears from this dedication, that he was distant from the church, perhaps through persecution, as he says, _Beloved brethren, it was Joseph_s lot to be separated from his brethren; but God meant it for good: though it was not for the present seen, yet in due time it appeared. Joseph_s dreams were fulfilled; and though the archers shot sorely at him, and grieved him, yet his bow abode in strength. It is one of the sad evils of the times, that brethren shoot at brethren; but this would be a mercy indeed, if all our aim might be more to enjoy and be conformable to Christ. One part of conformity to our Lord Jesus, is obedience to the precious ordinance of baptism. Judging you to be such as press after Christ your head, together with a testimonial of my unfeigned love to you, I have presented these few thoughts for your consideration. I have read of two loving friends, who, having spent a great part of the day in a matter of difference between them, could not be reconciled, and so parted. One of them bethinking himself of that text, Eph. iv. 26, ran to the other, saying, *The sun is going down*, by which they were immediately reconciled. My brethren, our sun is going down; eternity is upon us; and shall we not consider the work we have to do for the Lord? &c. This excellent little piece is divided into eleven chapters; _1. Christ was baptized in the river of Jordan. 2. Of the great commission for believers_ baptism. 3. Examples. 4. Baptism is dipping, or covering under water. 5. Proving water baptism to continue till the second coming of Jesus Christ. 6. That no measures of grace, or of the Spirit, are a sufficient ground to keep any from water-baptism. 7. Believers_ baptism a great ordinance. 8. Answers to common objections. 9. Believers_ baptism and infant baptism compared. 10. Plain scriptures concerning baptism, without any human consequences from man_s wisdom. 11. Considerations by way of conclusion._ The appendix is said to be _by another hand,_ and contains _Objections of the Paedobaptists, with answers thereunto._

The copy before me is the *fifth edition*, corrected: printed 1721. There is a recommendatory preface to it, which is signed William Kiffin, and R. C. *

(* This was Mr. Richard Claridge, who had been rector of Poppleton, and who was baptized at Bromsgrove, 1691. He settled in London as pastor of the church in Bagnio-court; but after a few years turned Quaker.)

There is no date to this epistle; but it appears to have been prefixed to the second edition. The writers of the preface say, _The author of this short and plain discourse was a true lover of our Lord Jesus and his holy appointments. He steered his whole course by the compass of the word, making Scripture precept or example his constant rule in matters of religion. Other men_s opinions or interpretations were not the standard by which he went; but, through the assistance of the Holy Spirit, he laboured to find out what the Lord

himself had said in his word. And therefore, throughout this little book, he still keeps close to the Scriptures, vouching no authority for what he delivers, but from thence.

What approbation this piece hath found, may appear from hence; that since the first edition of it here in England, it hath also been re-printed in Holland, was also lately translated into Welsh, and now growing scarce and much asked for, the bookseller hath been advised to give it another impression.

1677: Mr. Hercules Collins.

Mr. Keach has not mentioned who the minister was that was with the people at the time of Mr. Norcott's death; it should seem, however, that he did not expect him to be called to the pastoral office. Mr. Hercules Collins succeeded Mr. Norcott, and was settled as pastor of this church in 1677. He and his wife appear to have been members of the church in Petty-france in 1676, under the care of Mr. William Collins, though there is no evidence of his having been any relation of that worthy and learned minister. In the records of that church is the following memorandum:—Feb. 29, 1679-80. The congregation agreed to enter into an association with the congregation meeting in Gravel-lane, that our brother Collins is pastor of. _From his name bring frequently mentioned afterwards, there was evidently a close connection between the two churches.

Mr. Collins was not long in this situation before he was called to _suffer as a Christian._ On the persecution breaking out in 1684, he was committed to Newgate, where he lay till the popish politics of James II. led him _to proclaim liberty to protestant Dissenting captives,_ and _to open the prison doors to those that were bound._ For more than two years the meeting-house in Gravel-lane, and all others, were shut up, and the congregation scattered.

While Mr. Collins was in prison, he was called to witness the deaths of several of his brethren. The names of Delaune, and Bampfield, and Ralphson, who fell victims to the popish policy of Charles II, and the party zeal of persecuting prelates, should be engraven upon the hearts of the English Baptists. These were men who were valiant for the truth upon earth, at a time when they who departed from evil made themselves a prey. So true it is, that the wicked walk on every side, when the vilest of men are exalted.

To improve the deaths of these worthy confessors, Mr. Collins published a funeral sermon, entitled, _Counsel for the Living, occasioned by the Dead; or, a Discourse on Job. 3:17, 18. arising from the deaths of Mr. Francis Bampfield, and Mr. Zachariah Ralphson: by Hercules Collins, their Fellowprisoner in Newgate. There are several scriptures at length in the title page;—Ps.146: 7-11. 6:15; and 2 Tim. 1:10, 11. _London, printed by George Larkin, for the Author, 1684._

This sermon was accompanied with an elegy composed by a friend of Mr. Ralphson, and designed for him alone; but it was altered by Mr. Collins to be suitable to both: _1. As they were ministers of Christ. 2. As they were sufferers for Christ. 3. As to their zeal against Antichrist. 4. In respect of their longing for Sion's welfare, and their mourning

under Sion's calamities. 5. In respect of soul feelings, and soul supportings, by all the ways and means they were capable of in their confined estate._

A few lines from this elegy will give the reader an idea of the spirit in which it was written.

_May not all fear when heaven denounceth woes

Aloud by signal and by fatal blows,

Smiting the shepherd, calling guides away,

That flocks are left to wonder, starve, and stray;

Even when the wolves, the foxes, and the boar,

Rage for the prey, and harmless lambs devour?

By tongue I cannot, nor by pen express

My thoughts of them and their great worthiness;

Of their refined zeal, their hearts contrite,

Of their confessions, with a public sprite.

Their liberal souls were highly to be prized,

Also their stedfastness is magnified.

O zealous ones, who in the gap did stand,

True wrestling watchmen to preserve the land!

Striving withal the gospel to promote.

These seers are both removed from their station,

A signal loss both to the church and nation._ *

(* For fuller accounts of these pious Confessors and Martyrs, see vol. i. p. 397–407, where Mr. Bampfield is by mistake called Mr. *Edward* Bampfield,) and vol. ii. p. 476–480.)

On Mr. Collins's deliverance from prison in 1686, he returned to his work with renewed ardour. _He was not shocked, _ (greatly terrified,) says Mr. Piggott, _by his persecutors, though he suffered imprisonment for the name of Christ._

He appears to have been a zealous promoter of the plans adopted and recommended by the general assembly in 1689. He represented the church at Wapping, with Messrs. Humphrey Hutchings and John Overinge. In 1692 he attended the Assembly without the company of the deacons, who had perhaps been displeased with some part of the proceedings.

In 1692 Mr. Collins published a small well-written work, entitled, _Believers_ Baptism from Heaven, and of Divine Institution; Infants_ Baptism from Earth, and of Human Invention._ In 1699 he assisted in the ordination of Mr. Thomas Harrison, at Lorimers_ Hall.

But his race was very short: he finished his course while young, though his age is not particularly mentioned. He died Oct. 4, 1702, and was interred Oct. 9, in Bunhill-fields, *

(* _This is situated, _ says Maitland, _north of Artillery-ground, and south of Old Street-road, (by the Saxons denominated Eald-street, because it was part of the Roman military highway, which anciently led from the western to the eastern parts of the kingdom.) The space between Old-street and the Artillery-ground was called Bonhill, or Bunhill-fields. Part thereof, at present denominated Tindal_s, or the Dissenters_ great burying ground, was by the Mayor and Citizens of London, in the year 1665, set apart and consecrated, as a common cemetery, for the interment of such corpses as could not have room in their parochial burying grounds, in that dreadful year of pestilence. However, it not being made use of on that occasion, the said Tindal took a lease thereof, and converted it into a burial ground for the use of Dissenters; over the west gate of which was the following inscription. _This church yard was enclosed with a brick wall, at the sole charges of the city of London, in the mayoralty of Sir John Laurence, Knt. Anno Dom. 1665, and afterwards the gates thereof were built, and finished in the mayoralty of Sir Thomas Bloudworth, Knt. Anno Dom. 1666. Maitland, p. 775.)

where, according to Strype, *

(* Strype, vol.ii.p. 55.)

a stone was erected to the memory of him and Sarah his wife, who died soon after him, April 6, 1703. Mr. Piggott preached his funeral sermon at Wapping, while the corpse of his late brother was before him. This was afterwards printed, and dedicated _to the church of Christ lately under the care of the deceased Mr. Hercules Collins._ In this he says, _Now if it be a favourable providence when God blesses a people with an able minister, then certainly the removal of such a one by death must be a sad sign of the divine displeasure; especially when, according to the course of nature, he might have

been useful many years to come. This, my brethren you might have hoped for from your late pastor, who was suddenly snatched from you. Your loss is great, but heaven can relieve you under it. The stream, indeed, that formerly refreshed you is dried up, but the fountain is inexhaustible: the borrowed light that you enjoyed is eclipsed, but the Sun of Righteousness will ever shine with an unfading lustre; for he is the same, yesterday, to-day, and for ever; and let such thoughts as these be some revival under this terrible stroke._

1702: Mr. Hercules Collins.

Mr. Piggott's text was Matt. 24:44. *Therefore be ye also ready, &c.* It appears from the sermon, that Mr. Collins was ill only a few days. He had preached on the previous Lord's day a funeral sermon from those words, *They overcame by the blood of the Lamb.* He retained an excellent savour of divine things to the day of his death; and discoursed on the same morning in an affecting manner upon his last text. _ 'Tis true, _ exclaims this eloquent affectionate man, _ he is fallen in battle, but he died more than a conqueror; and having finished his course, and kept the faith, he quitted the body, that he might receive an unfading crown of glory._

Addressing particularly the members of the church, Mr. Piggott says, _ You have lost an excellent pastor. In the midst of your tears look up to heaven, and pray to the *Lord of the harvest that he would send forth more labourers into the harvest.* Remember, the God you pray to can dispense the Spirit in what manner he pleases, and qualify whom he will for the ministration of the gospel. But let not that make you defective on your part; for you must not expect that preachers will drop down from heaven, or spring out of the earth; but due care must be taken for the encouragement of humble men, who have real gifts, that such be trained up in useful learning, that they may be able to defend the truths they preach. Your pastor's mouth is stopped, and cannot speak to you; but this I am sure was the sense of his mind._ It appears from Mr. Collins's publications, that he was a man of respectable learning. Mr. Piggott estimates that he was not so accurate a preacher as some others; but he adds, _ This defect was supplied by a constant flame; for no man could preach with a more affectionate regard to the salvation of souls. He had Luther's three qualifications for a gospel minister, _ meditation, prayer, and temptation._ And how well he discharged the other branches of his pastoral function this church is a witness, which he has watched over and visited above five and twenty years._

Thus the church at Wapping was again left destitute of a pastor, In urging them to maintain a suitable deportment, Mr. Piggott said, at the close of his sermon, _ Labour to *keep the unity of the Spirit, in the bond of peace.* And though your elder is dead, remember your relation to the church is not dissolved, but you are bound to keep your places, and do your utmost to promote the happiness of this congregation. The church is in a state of widowhood; be as speedy as you can in filling up the place in the church of him that is gone: and may you have a *pastor after God's own heart!*_

Mr. Mark Key, a member and minister of Devonshire-square church, was invited to succeed Mr. Collins; but at the earnest solicitation of that church, April 1, 1703, he

respectfully declined accepting the situation of pastor in Gravel-lane, Wapping. It was probably from the circumstance of Mr. Key_s preferring to be an assistant minister at Devonshire-square, that five or six of the members of the church in Gravel-lane applied in June, 1704, to join in the communion with that church, and that the church at Gravel-lane refused to grant them a dismission for that purpose, though they had nothing to allege against them injurious to their reputation.

1715: Mr. Edward Elliott.

The next minister respecting whom I have any information at this place, was a Mr. Edward Elliott, who, in 1715, was the pastor here; how much earlier I have not ascertained. His name is mentioned as pastor of one of the churches, whose poor were relieved by the bounty of Mr. Thomas Hollis, in 1715. It is probable that Mr. Elliott was removed by death soon after; as in the year 1717, in the records of the Baptist fund, where the congregation is spoken of, it is said to have been under the care of_the late Mr. Elliott._

1726: Mr. Clendon Dawkes, and Mr. Samuel Wilson.

About the year 1719, or 1720, Mr. Clendon Dawkes accepted the pastoral office, but resigned it at Christmas, 1725. The church became united with the Baptist fund during his ministry, by paying ?50, October 2, 1722. Their collection the next year was ten guineas. It is evident his ministry had been very unpopular, as I find in November, 1724, two messengers from the church at Wapping, applying for advice to the Society of Ministers, concerning their present circumstances in relation to Mr. Dawkes. They were advised to send messengers to him into the country, clothed with the authority of the church, to lay before him, and advise with him concerning the declining state of the church, and in the most tender manner to acquaint him that if he should remain incapable of serving them, they must seek for other assistance._

Immediately on Mr. Dawkes_s leaving them, they invited Mr. Samuel Wilson, who had lately entered with much popularity upon the work of the ministry, and was an assistant to Mr. John Noble, at Tallow-Chandlers_ Hall. He settled as pastor of this church about the year 1726, in which year his name was returned to the Baptist Fund. The next year I find him mentioned in this relation as a minister of the General Body of Dissenting Ministers. When he first took the charge of the church, it was in a low declining state; but, upon its reviving with his ministry, he and some of his friends resolved to erect a new building in what was then called Rosemary Branch, now Little Prescott-street. This was in the year 1730. Some of the members who disapproved this proceeding, sent a letter to the Society of Ministers, at Blackwell_s Coffee-house, addressed to Mr. (afterwards Dr.) John Gill, desiring the ministers to dissuade Mr. Wilson from his purpose; no attention seems to have been paid to this curious application.

1733: Mr. John Rhudd.

Those who remained at the old place in Broad-street, after Mr. Wilson and the majority of the church had left them, resolved to procure another pastor, and fixed upon Mr. John Rhudd, who was ordained over it in the year 1731 or 1732, as I find him reported to the General Body, Aug. 29, 1732, as having been _chosen pastor to a congregation in Broad-street, Wapping._ This connection, however, was but of short continuance; as Mr. Rhudd soon declared himself to have embraced the sentiments which his brother, Dr. Sayer Rhudd, had avowed, and the church, to their honour, immediately proceeded to exclude him from the pastoral office.

From a pamphlet published by Mr. John Rhudd, in the next year, the following account is extracted.

_Minutes of the Church meeting in Broad-street, Wapping, at their church-meeting, held on the Lord_s day, the 3d of March, 1733. _The church being informed that brother John Rhudd, our pastor, has declared himself of principles destructive of the personality of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit; that is, that he believes there is but one person in the godhead; and he having declared himself of that opinion to the church; it is agreed,

_1. To abide by the articles of our faith, recorded in the church book; viz. _We believe that there are three persons in the godhead, the Father, the Word, and the Spirit: and that these three are one God.

_2. That brother Rhudd_s declaration of one person in the godhead, is destructive of the above article of our faith, and consequently, of what we believe to be a fundamental article of the Christian religion.

_3. That our brother Rhudd, having denied the personality of the Father, the Son, and the Spirit, or the doctrine of the Trinity, is guilty of heresy.

_4. That brother Rhudd be desired not to officiate as pastor among us, till he has given us satisfaction of his forsaking his heresy, and having embraced the doctrine of the Trinity, or personality of the Father, Son, and Spirit.

_5. Agreed to admonish brother Rhudd to forsake his heresy and return to the truth; and to appoint brother Allchurch, brother Scott, and brother Gander, to give the said admonition.

_6. Agreed to lay the above resolutions before the Board of Ministers of the Particular Baptist persuasion, and to desire them to preach among us on Lord_s days; and we appoint brother E. Elliott, and brother T. Gander, to wait on the Board with these our resolutions.

JOHN SCOTT, Secretary.

Lord_s day, May 26, 1733.

Mr. Rhudd entitled his pamphlet, *“A Letter to the Protestant Dissenting Congregation meeting in Broad-street, Wapping, London; occasioned by their late proceedings against the author, on his profession of Unitarianism. By John Rhudd, Minister of the Gospel. With me it is a very small thing that I should be judged of man’s judgment: he that judgeth me is the Lord. St. Paul’s 1 Epist. Cor. London, sold by J. Noon, at the White Hart, Cheapside. c1c Ic ccxxxiiii. Price 6d.”*

From this it appears that Mr. Rhudd, finding the church resolved to dismiss him from his office if he did not renounce his errors, immediately gave them his written resignation, telling them they were free to proceed to another election. It does not appear that a single member of the church adhered to him, notwithstanding all the sophistry by which he endeavored to support the Unitarian hypothesis.

Mr. Rhudd has made a retort, which, if founded in truth, must have been very biting to the members of the church. He says, *“And now you are in this fit of discipline, it might become you perhaps, brethren, allow me to suggest by the by, (nor call it a name it does not deserve,) to consider, whether there are not others of your community as obnoxious on moral accounts, as I am so unhappy to be rendered in my doctrinal heretical principles.”* p. 48.

But Mr. Rhudd was very angry when he published his pamphlet, and therefore implicit reliance must not be placed on his charges. Nothing, however, was half so provoking to him as the silence of the *“Machiavels at the head of the Particular Baptist interest.”* He says, *“Since they will not publish it, we will let all the world know what we are made heretics for; we dare you to the combat; let the cause be tried. If you have so much leisure and abilities, we desire they may be laid out upon us; we hope to approve ourselves a match for them all. We are neither afraid nor ashamed of our principles. One God is our Mediator; or, as the Scripture expresses it, God in Christ; or, God manifest in the flesh, for the salvation of the elect, the kindred of that flesh. This we assert is the great mystery of godliness, in opposition to all the metaphysical jargon, and impertinent nonsense, of that illiterate enthusiast old Athanasius. None of your Tritheism for us; we detest and renounce it all; and are ready to enter the controversy as soon as you please. As you have made us heretics, you shall reclaim us again; or depend upon it, we will make you something before we have done with you.”*

The church in Broad-street does not appear to have had another pastor after this. Crosby, who thought the Messrs. Rhudd’s hardly dealt with by the Society of Ministers, gives no account of Mr. John Rhudd, or of his connection with this church; he only says, when mentioning the removal of the majority to Prescott-street, *“The remaining part continued some years together; but labouring under many difficulties, they were in the end necessitated to dissolve their church state.”* Crosby wrote this in 1740.

The meeting-house in Broad-street is mentioned by Maitland, in 1739, as one of those which belonged to the Independents. It is probable, therefore, that the Baptist congregation was reduced so low, that it could not renew the lease, or maintain some

other expenses, and was thus obliged to leave the first meeting-house erected for the Particular Baptists in London, for the use of another Denomination.

This ancient church, which had enjoyed the rich labours of Spilsbury, a Norcott, and a Collins, and which had prospered under such culture, appears to have been gradually declining under the preaching of their successors (especially of Mr. Clendon Dawkes, who had contributed, it seems, to reduce several churches,) until it experienced a temporary revival under Mr. Wilson. Still however they maintained an honest zeal for the fundamental doctrine of the Trinity, and the proper divinity of the Son of God, and of the Holy Spirit. One cannot but lament that they were obliged to forsake the house erected by the piety of their godly and orthodox progenitors.

It is a gratifying circumstance that the church, (by which is meant a majority of the members which constituted the body previous to the separation,) after it had removed to Prescot-street, with Mr. Samuel Wilson, experienced a happy revival; and was greatly increased under the ministry of that learned and popular minister, who will be again introduced to the reader under that article.

VOLUME III.

BOOK. II.

1686: Church in Devonshire Square.

CHURCH IN DEVONSHIRE SQUARE

THE Meeting-house, which is a substantial brick building, is situated in a paved yard behind Devonshire-square, Bishopgate-street. It was built at the beginning of the reign of James II. and was opened for public worship on Tuesday, March 1, 1686. Mr. Kiffin, the venerable pastor, and others, preached on that occasion; and what was not very usual at that time among the Baptists, _psalms were sung there._

This meeting-house is of an oblong form, and has three galleries: it will contain about six hundred persons. It was originally fitted up without seats, and had only forms, which was still the case in the recollection of an old member of that church, who gave this information to the writer. The only marks of distinction in the meeting-house are two raised seats, expensively fitted up on each side of the pulpit. These were altered for the accommodation, and at the expense, of the Lady Dowager Page, when the Joiners;-hall church removed from Pinners_-hall to Devonshire-square, in June 1724. About fifty years since the meeting-house was new fronted, and improved in other respects.

1638: Church in Devonshire-square.

This church was formed under Mr. William Kiffin in 1638, and it should seem had assembled near their present place, in Fisher_s Folly. But after the fire of London, which began September 2, 1666, their place of worship was wrested from them, and converted

into a tabernacle for an episcopal congregation, till the parish churches were rebuilt, when the Baptists were graciously permitted, by the head of the [established] church, again to occupy their own meeting-house. There is no reason to doubt that the first place mentioned in the following document from Maitland's History of London, (which is contained also in Skepp's and Pennant's,) refers to Mr. Kiffin's meeting-house, which is described as _a convenient place, with two galleries, pews, and seats. *

(* At this time the Conventicle Act was passed. _After having driven the Dissenters from their meeting-houses in London by an armed force._ Says Maitland, _to the great terror of some, and the death of others, they now changed hands, and instead of appropriating the meeting-houses to *profane uses*, they were converted into so many tabernacles, for the use of the citizens till their churches should be re-built, during which time they were to be regularly supplied by Church of England divines; wherefore, on the 15th of June, 1666, public notice was given by royal proclamation, _That the places undermentioned, of late made use of for conventicles and unlawful assemblies, are now, *by his Majesty's particular command in Council*, appointed to be used every Lord's day for the celebration of divine worship, and preaching the word of God by approved orthodox ministers, appointed by the Bishop of London, to commence on the Sunday following, for the benefit of the inhabitants of the adjacent parishes respectively, where parish churches were consumed by the late dreadful fire; viz.)

1. In *Fisher's Folly* +

+*So called from Jasper Fisher, citizen and goldsmith, one the six clerks in chancery, and a justice of the peace, who erected a large and magnificent mansion here, and embarrassed his circumstances by his extravagant acts of ostentation. On the site of this mansion Devonshire-square was afterwards erected*

in Bishopgate-street, a convenient place, with two galleries, pews and seats

2. In *Hand-alley* in Bishopsgate-street, a large room purposely built for a meeting-house, with three galleries, thirty large pews, and many benches and forms, known by the name of *Vincent's* congregation.
3. In *St. Michael's-lane*, a large room with two galleries, and thirty-nine forms.
4. In *Mugwell-street*, (Monkwell-street,) Mr. Doolittle's meeting-house, built of brick, with three galleries, full of large pews below, with locks and keys to them, besides benches and forms.
5. The *Cockpit*, in Jewin-street, a meeting-house of one Grimes, three galleries, many pews, forms, and benches.
6. In *Blackfriars*, Mr. Woods meeting house; four rooms opening into one another, with lattice partitions, each room conveniently filled with benches and forms.

7. In *Salisbury-court*, four rooms opening into one another, in the possession of John Farol, a schoolmaster.
8. In *New-street*, Shoe-lane, four rooms opening into one another, with seventeen pews, and divers benches, in the possession of Mrs. Fowler._*History of London*, p. 298.

1666: Mr. William Kiffin.

The church book before the Restoration in 1660 is lost, and that marked B. commences March 15, 1664. From these records it should appear, that some of the people had deserted their brethren with the change of the times. One of these is said to have _neglected his duty a long time, and forsaken the assemblies of his people, and also frequented parish churches, contrary to the true end of his former profession, and taken upon him the charge of a church-warden._ Refusing to appear before the church at the request of the messengers, _brother Kiffin and brother Cooper, he was separated from their communion in a solemn manner, according to rule._ Another person, the same day, (March 15, 1664,) and for similar conduct, it was _unanimously concluded and judged, should be cut off from them as an unfruitful branch,_ &c.

1681: Mr. William Kiffin.

Mr. Thomas Patient, of whom an account is given, vol. ii. p. 326–328, was ordained as co-pastor with Mr. William Kiffin, June 28, 1666, and died the next month, July 30, 1666. *

(* This was the year of that plague, which, in the course of about eight months, carried off, it was computed, 68,596 persons, in London only. London had often been visited with this dreadful calamity before—Camden, speaking of the Charter-house, says, _And in that place heretofore was a most famous burying cemetery, or burial-place, in which, in a plague time at London, were buried, in the year 1349, more than fifty thousand persons; a thing recorded to posterity by an inscription, which continued there a long time engraven in brass._—*Britannia*, p. 433.)

Daniel Dyke, M. A. succeeded to that office, February 17, 1668, and died in 1688. See an account of him, vol. ii. p. 328–331. It was during his time that the meeting-house was erected. Mr. Dyke was appointed with Mr. Benjamin Dennis in 1679, _to represent the associated churches in London,_ at an Association which was to be held at Hemel Hempstead, October 6, 1679.

There is a blank in the records of the church in Devonshire-square from 1676 till October 1690.

It has been stated that the separation of this church from that in Gravel-lane, Wapping, arose from a controversy which took place among its members, _on the propriety of admitting persons to preach who had not been baptized by immersion; and that this

produced a friendly separation, headed by Mr. Kiffin, who seems to have been averse to mixed communion: but the two societies kept up a friendly correspondence._

This statement is certainly incorrect. No evidence can be produced that the church in Old Gravel-lane ever practised mixed communion. That Mr. Kiffin was an advocate for strict communion, is certainly true; but a belief that _baptism by immersion, on a profession of faith, was appointed by our Lord, and practised by the apostles *as a term of communion*, was never considered as involving the question, whether an unbaptized person should be permitted to preach in our congregations. The writer is willing to challenge investigation on this subject, and to assert and maintain, till the contrary is proved from good authority, that no one instance can be produced from the whole history of the denomination, of such folly and liberality. The probability is, that the separation was an amicable arrangement for the accommodation of the members of the church who resided in the city.

The only work published by Mr. Kiffin, was a treatise with the following title page:— *A sober Discourse of right to Church Communion, wherein is proved by Scripture, the example of Primitive Times, and the practice of all that have professed the Christian Religion, that no unbaptized Person may be regularly admitted to the Lord's Supper: by W. Kiffin, a lover of Truth and Peace. Then they that gladly received the word, were baptized; and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls, Acts 2:41. Ye shall observe to do therefore, as the Lord your God hath commanded you: ye shall not turn aside to the right hand or to the left, Deut. 5:22. Joying, and beholding your order, and the steadfastness of your faith in Christ, Col. ii. 5. London, 1681.*

This publication was intended as a reply to Mr. Bunyan's little piece on Mixed Communion printed in 1672, and to his *Peaceable Principles and True*,_ written on the same subject, though Mr. Kiffin does not even mention Mr. Bunyan's name. The subject is very candidly and luminously discussed: I shall quote the concluding paragraph, to show the spirit in which it was composed. It is an answer to a supposed objection:— *And whereas it may be objected, that 'tis love and not baptism that discovers us to be Christ's disciples; it is answered, We do readily confess that we are commanded to put on love, Col.3:14, which is a great character of a disciple of Christ; and it is much to be lamented, that there is so little seen among saints. Yet that cannot be called love, which is exercised in opposition to the order prescribed in the word, by which ordinances are to be administered; for as love is a grace of the Spirit of Christ, so ordinances are the appointments of the same Spirit which works grace in the hearts of Christians, all true gospel love being regulated by gospel rule. And as all men may know the disciples of Christ by their live one to another, so also, it is a character given by the same Lord, of being a disciple, when this love is manifest in keeping his commandments.*_ Mr. Kiffin quotes at length the following scriptures, John 14:15, 21, 23, 24; and then adds, *Now of these commandments this ordinance of baptism is not the least; and it seems to savour of little love in them that would have men believe it is advanced in them above their brethren, to charge them with a want of love, as the only reason why they cannot admit persons to the Supper of the Lord that never yet received the baptism of Christ. Therefore, here we can appeal to the searcher of hearts, that the true reason is, because we dare not break that rule and order by which we find the primitive saints walked, and*

not want of love to them; and the sense we have of the great severity God hath shewed against those that have made the least breach upon that order which he himself hath prescribed.

These things I leave to the serious consideration of those to whom this Essay may come, desiring they may try all things, and hold fast that which is good.

As the address prefixed to this Essay, (p. 129–131,) states a few historical facts respecting this venerable man, who had now attained his 68th year, a short extract will be made from it. _To the Christian reader. When it pleased God, of his free grace, to cause me to make a serious inquiry after Jesus Christ, and to give me some taste of his pardoning love, the sense of which did engage my heart with desires to be obedient to his will in all things, I used all endeavours by converse with such as were able, and also by diligently searching the Scriptures, with earnest desires of God that I might be directed in a right way of worship; and after some time concluded, that the safest way was to follow the footsteps of the flock, namely, that order laid down by Christ and his apostles, and practised by the primitive Christians in their times; which I found to be, that after conversion they were baptized, added to the church, and continued in the apostle_s doctrine, and fellowship, and breaking of bread, and in prayer; according to which O thought myself bound to be conformable. And having continued in the profession of the same for these forty years, although through many weaknesses and fears, temptations and sufferings, yet not without some witness from God of his gracious acceptance and strength to this very day; the sense I have of my own weakness and inability would have been a bar to me to appear in this public way, did I not see a necessity lying upon me for the truth_s sake, and the sakes of many, by reason of some that have lately risen up to weaken, if not to make void, that great ordinance of baptism, by endeavouring to maintain that all persons that believe, although they never did, nor do practise the same, may partake of the Lord_s Supper,_ &c

1688: Mr. William Kiffin.

This good man, after the publication of his Essay, was called into the field of Christian warfare, and at the last period of his life endured some of his sharpest agonies. Those who have read the former volumes will know, that this remark refers to the tragical end of Messrs. William and Benjamin Hewling, his grandsons, who were officers in the Duke of Monmouth_s army, and who were executed, by order of the ferocious and implacable Jefferies, at Lyme, in Dorsetshire. It was after this publication, too, that he was made Alderman of the City, by a commission from King James II. in 1688. He was also appointed _a justice of the peace, and one of the lieutenancy._ To avoid ruin by excessive fined, he accepted, though with great reluctance, the office of Alderman; but he ran the risk of being fined L500 for neglecting to take the Lord_s Supper according to the rites of the Church of England. The part Mr. Kiffin took in the General Assemblies, &c. notwithstanding his age, has been fully given in our former volumes.

Mr. Kiffin, from a letter preserved in Thurloe_s State Papers, has been stated to have offered himself as a candidate to represent the county of Middlesex in the year 1656. That

letter, however, contains no ground for such a conclusion. He is called, in a reproachful pamphlet, published in 1659, a Lieutenant-Colonel of the London Militia, and is spoken of as being at the camp at Finsbury. It is intimated, too, that he had been in Parliament. The writer says, _If you compare his speeches in that mock Parliament, with his exercises and lectures at his Bedlam, you would wonder one and the same man could be so silent and clamorous; but he was Will the whisperer to one, and the bawler to the other._ *

(* See a pamphlet entitled _The life and approaching death of William Kiffin, extracted out of the Visitation Book, by a church member: 1659, five quarto pages:_ the reader, by considering the *date*, will see that the writer was bowing towards the rising sun!)

1693: Mr. William Kiffin.

Mr. Kiffin, having acquired as a merchant a very large property, was the object of envy; and his enemies were always plotting to bring him into some difficulty with the government. Doubtless that was the design of the letter mentioned above, which Mr. Kiffin prudently sent to the Secretary of State, Thurloe, that he might not be implicated in the charge of having encouraged seditious speeches against the Protector and the government. It arose probably from the following circumstance, mentioned in a manuscript account of Mr. Kiffin's life, written by himself:— _When the first war between England and Holland broke forth, the Hollanders had, by compliance with the Swedes and Danes, bought up all the pitch, tar, hemp, and cordage, to prevent the Parliament from being able to supply their fleet. Upon which the Council of State made an order that all merchants, that would bring in any of the said goods, should have orders to bring in any other sorts of prohibited goods, proportionable to the above said goods they brought in; which every man that went for the said order had; and by means thereof the parliament was furnished with all things belonging to shipping during that war, That order I, with many others, took, and enjoyed the benefit of, upon the terms of said order expressed; which orders were given, not as an act of favour, but of State. Other orders, besides these two I never had any from the Parliament; and from the Protector I obtained not any: neither did I desire any; but whatever I had was in common with all men. I the rather give some account of this, to satisfy all hereafter, that what estate God hath blessed me withal, hath been by his hand in my lawful employment._

In 1693, when Mr. Kiffin wrote the above statement, he was seventy-seven years of age. In addition to extracts from this valuable manuscript, in this and the former volumes, I now quote the conclusion, to show that neither mercantile pursuits, nor worldly honours and riches, had proved injurious to this worthy Christian pastor. _I have given this brief account of these things, that you may see how good the Lord hath been, to prevent the designs then in hand to destroy both religion and liberty. And I heartily desire that both myself and all others concerned, may acknowledge the great goodness of God therein, that he may have the glory of all our delivering mercies; and [that] you, my children, grand-children, and great grand-children, may remember them with grateful hearts, and thus further the praise of God. Towards me be [it] remembered, that during the time of my being in the office of Alderman, (my lot being to be Alderman of the Ward of

Cheap,) although I was a stranger to most of the Ward, yet I found so much respect from them, as could not be expected of me. Having been in that office about nine months, I was discharged of it to my very great satisfaction. I have left these several providences and mercies behind me, that you may consider them.

_Having tasted of the goodness of God, and his favour towards me from my youth,–(it being now sixty years since it pleased the Lord to give me a taste of his rich grace and mercy in Jesus Christ to my soul; although my unprofitableness under these mercies and providences that have attended me hath been very great, and they are not to be looked upon as products of chance, as many do some experiences and deliverances they receive from God in the course of their lives, but are fruits of the care and goodness God is pleased to show to his poor people in the world; there is not any design hatched against them for their ruin, but they are rescued from them by the special care and providence of God; and I may say by experience, *If the Lord had not been my help, many a time I had been swallowed up quick,*)–I leave these few experiences with you, desiring the Lord to bless them, and bless them to you; and, above all, I pray for you, that you may in a special manner look after the great concerns of your souls; to know God, and Jesus Christ, whom to know is eternal life; endeavoring to be diligent, to inquire after, and to be established in, the great doctrines of the gospel, which are of absolute necessity to salvation,

I every day must expect to leave this world; having lived in it much longer than I expected, being now in the 77th year of my age, and yet know not what my eyes may see before my change. The world is full of confusion; the last times are upon us; the signs of them are very visible; *Iniquity abounds, and the love of many waxes cold.* God is by his Providence shaking the earth under our feet. There is no sure foundation of rest and peace but only in Jesus Christ; to whose grace I commit you.

1701: Mr. William Kiffin.

Mr. Kiffin seems to have considered himself as standing on the brink of Jordan when he wrote this edifying statement for the use of his descendants. He, however, continued seven years longer in the wilderness; and, *after having served his generation by the will of God, he came to his grave in a full age, full of days, riches, and honour.* He died Dec. 29, 1701, and was buried in Bunhill-fields, where a stone was erected to his memory. The inscription is in vol. ii. p. 326. There is a fine original painting of this worthy man in the possession of the Rev. Richard Frost, of Dunmore, Essex, one of Mr. Kiffin_s descendents; and a fine engraving from it was given in the first volume of Mr. Wilson_s *History of Dissenters*.

Mr. Kiffin lived with his wife in the greatest domestic comfort for the space of forty-four years. Concerning her he says, _Whose tenderness for me, and faithfulness to God, were such as cannot by me be expressed, being one that sympathized with me in all my afflictions. I can truly say, I never knew her to utter the least discontent under all the various providences that attended me or her; but eyeing the hand of God in them, so as to

be a constant encourager of me in the ways of God. Her death was to me the greatest sorrow I ever met withal in the world. She departed this life the 5th of October, 1682._

Mr. Kiffin had three daughters, and several sons. One of his daughters married Mr. Benjamin Hewling, a Turkey merchant of considerable property in London. Another, Mr. Hayes the banker, who was tried for his life on the charge of having transmitted money to Sir Thomas Armstrong, who had been outlawed for that which brought Russell and Sydney, those illustrious patriots, to the scaffold. This gentleman _defended himself,_ says Burnet, _with great spirit and success, to the confusion of the court._ Another married Mr. Thomas Liddel. One son died when about twenty, and another was poisoned by a popish priest at Leghorn. His grand daughter, Hannah Hewling, (sister to the unfortunate youths before mentioned,) about a year after the execution of her brothers, married Major Henry Cromwell, grandson of the celebrated Oliver Cromwell. From this marriage the late Oliver Cromwell, of Cheshunt, who published his memoirs of his great progenitor, descended, and was the last surviving branch of that once distinguished family.

1690: Mr. Richard Adams.

Mr. RICHARD ADAMS had been ordained co-pastor with Mr. Kiffin in October, 1690. It was towards the latter end of the reign of Charles II. that Mr. Adams came out of Leicestershire to London. He was first settled as pastor of a church at Shad-Thames, Bermondsey, and, at the death of Mr. Daniel Dyke, succeeded him as pastor of the church in Devonshire-square. He was an old man at that time, but he continued pastor of the church about twenty years, though he was unable to preach for several years before his death.

Mr. Adams attended the meeting of the General Assembly at Lorimers_-hall, in 1705, but took offence at some part of the business, and gave a different statement of the transactions of the Assembly to what was given by Mr. Key and Mr. Toms, on which account the church withdrew the next year. The last time Mr. Adams attended the church-meeting was April 24, 1718: it is probable he died soon after.

1702: Mr. Mark Key.

Mr. MARK KEY, who first became assistant to Mr. Adams, and then succeeded him in the office, appears to have been a highly esteemed and useful minister. His parents were members of the church in White_s_alley, Moorfields. Mr. Mark Key joined that communion, and was by them called to the ministry in April 1691. He became an assistant minister in the church in the same year, but resigned the office on account of ill-health, in April 1695, and retired into the country for the benefit of the air. In June, 1692, we find that he was engaged by the church in St. John_s Court, Hart-street, Covent Garden, in connection with Mr. John Piggott, _to carry on the work of the ministry there,_ for which he was to be paid fifteen pounds per annum as the morning preacher. Mr. Key did not long continue in this connection, as he became a member of the church in Devonshire-square, Feb. 27, 1701-2. In June, the same year, he _was called by the

congregation to exercise his gift among them;_ and on Feb. 4, 1702-3, he was unanimously chosen to be an assistant to Mr. Adams for one part of the Lord_s day, and was also requested to _remove his lectures from Ropemaker_s-alley * to Devonshire-square:_ to these requests he acceded the 4th of March following.

(* This was a meeting-house near Moorefields, built in 1672 by the Rev. Edward West, M. A. who was ejected from Little Wittenham, Berkshire. At the time Mr. Key preached his lecture here, the Independent congregation was under the care of Mr. John Lewis. + When this place was taken down, the congregation removed to a new place in Aldermanbury Posteru.

+See Wilson_s History, vol. ii. p. 536.)

Several attempts were made by other churches to obtain Mr. Key as their pastor, which, as he was only an assistant minister, was not considered to be dishonourable. It was within the first month after he was chosen by the congregation at Devonshire-square, that he was requested to undertake the pastoral care of the church in Broad-street, Old Gravel-lane, Wapping. In the month of June following, he received a similar pressing invitation from the church at Warwick, and another about six months afterwards, (Jan. 11, 1704,) from a church in Petticoat-lane, London: so great, however, was the attachment of the church to him, that they would not suffer him to accept of either of these calls to leave them.

It seems probable that the latter invitation arose from the uneasiness that had been occasioned by the different views entertained of the transactions of the Assembly at Lorimers_-hall by Mr. Key and his venerable colleague. But there was, say the records, _a universal unwillingness to part with him._ On this being communicated by a deputation from the church-meeting, he replied, that _the affection of the church was not more to him than his was to them; that he always eyed the providence of God, and desired so to do; and that he would not remove from this congregation until his call was so clear that we ourselves should be satisfied with the clearness of it._

1706: Mr. Mark Key.

Mr. Key attended the Assembly at Joiners_-hall in 1705, as a spectator merely, the church having withdrawn from the connection. In December of that year it was resolved that it should be submitted to all the members of the church to call him to the office of joint-pastor with Mr. Adams. At the next meeting, December 27, it is said, _Accordingly, having taken it into consideration, we have considered the qualifications laid down by the apostle for so great an office, and do unanimously agree, that our brother Key is qualified for that office according to the intent of the Holy Ghost, and therefore have concluded, that the church meet this day fortnight at ten o_clock, in order to seek the face of God, and beg his presence with us, and then proceed to the choice of brother Key, accordingly as the Lord shall direct._ His call to the office was, with the cordial approbation of the pastor and the whole church, on Jan. 10, 1705-6. On the 24th of the same month Mr. Key informs the church, _that although sensible of his own unfitness for such an office, yet

from the entire love he bears to the church, and believing the church bears the like to him, together with the sense he hath of the duty incumbent on him to lay out himself for God the little time he shall continue in this world, he does accept of the office of pastor, and will endeavour to be jointly serviceable to the church with our beloved brother Adams, as the Lord shall enable him._

The ordination ceremony was notwithstanding deferred, on account of some difficulties, until the same month in the next year; when, on the 27th of December, 1706, he was solemnly invested with the office by Mr. Joseph Maisters and Mr. Adams, praying and laying their hands on him, Mr. Adams pronouncing the following words: _I now declare, by the authority of Christ and this church, that my brother Mark Key is by this church appointed or ordained a joint-elder, pastor, or overseer, with myself, over her. _On this occasion a sermon was preached by Mr. Maisters, pastor of the church at Joiners_-hall.

Mr. Key appears to have been a vigilant and circumspect pastor, and a zealous evangelical minister. The church in Devonshire-square, in 1715, contributed ten pounds towards repairing the baptizing-place in Fair-street, Horselydown. This church was one of the first that united in the Baptist fund, in 1717; and the church meeting in Devonshire-square has continued in connection with it till the present day.

Mr. Key_s name is found among the subscribing ministers at the Salters_-hall conference; from which we may infer that he was _jealous for the Lord God of hosts,_ at a time when sophistical ministers were for _breaking down the altars;_ or at least when even good men were so far imposed upon by the specious pretence, that voluntarily to subscribe a human exposition of a mysterious doctrine, when a difference of opinion existed as to the meaning of the Scriptures on that subject, would be to acknowledge a human authority in the church; and therefore they preferred rather to be suspected of having given up the fundamental doctrine of the Trinity, and be considered as having joined the ranks of Arians or Socinians.

1726: Death of Mr. Key.

Mr. Key, after the death of Mr. Adams in 1718, was the sole pastor of the church until his death in 1726. Some idea may be formed of the distress this event occasioned from the manner in which his death is noticed on the church book:– _It having been reported that it hath pleased Almighty God, in the all-wise dispensation of his providence, to exercise this church with the loss of our well-beloved brother, Mark Key, our late pastor, and that several of the brethren have had a meeting to consider of the funeral; it was thought proper to propose and agree, 1. That the corpse be carried from the meeting-house, and interred in the burial-ground, Bunhill-fields, on Monday the 27th inst. 2. That a sermon be preached by Mr. Richardson; to begin at four o_clock precisely. 3. That Mr. Noble, or Mr. Wallin, be desired to pronounce a funeral oration at the grave. 4. That the following ministers be invited to support the pall, viz. Mr. Noble, Mr. Wallin, Mr. Richardson, Mr. Rees, Mr. Ridgeway, and Mr. Arnold; all being pastors of churches. 5. That the following pastors and ministers be also invited, viz. Mr. Barrow, Mr. Gill, Mr. Harrison, Mr. Wilson, Mr. Mulliner, Mr. Biddle, Mr. Ring, Mr. Spencer, Mr. Townsend, the

Sabbatarian Minister, Mr. Sandford, Mr. Davenport, and Mr. Morton; and that hatbands, gloves and cloaks, be provided for all the ministers invited. All the brethren are desired to provide themselves hatbands, gloves, and cloaks, for their more decent attendance at the funeral._ It is added, _To all which the church unanimously agreed, and ordered it to be entered in the church book. It was also agreed to spend part of Thursday the 30th inst. in prayer, to humble ourselves before God under our afflictive circumstances, and to seek his blessing and direction upon this sad and mournful occasion._

At the proposed meeting, after some time spent in prayer, it was asked, _Whether, upon the death of our pastor, the church do resolve to continue in their church state?_ This was carried without any one contradicting. The next month we find them resolving to invite the Rev. Messrs. Wallin, Arnold, Richardson, and Wilson, to administer the Lord_s Supper to the church in there turns. In September they invited Mr. Andrew Gifford, as is mentioned in the life of that minister. They state that this resolution arose from being convinced that the hope of the church being supplied with gifts of their own, had expired. It should appear from this statement that they had expected that one or other of their own members, who had been encouraged to preach, might probably be acceptable: these were Messrs. John Toms, one of the deacons, Charles Bowler, and Thomas Sandford. The first of these is found among the subscribing ministers at Salters_-hall, in 1719. *

(* We find that the church had requested Mr. John Toms, and Mr. Richard Bowler, February 21, 1722, to assist Mr. Key on Lord_s day mornings.)

1727: Dissolution of the Church.

At the church meeting, Nov. 25, 1726, it was stated that the church at Turners_-hall had signified a wish for a union of the two churches, which, after a good deal of difficulty, was consummated June 4, 1727, the church in Devonshire-square agreeing to dissolve its church state in order to unite with church in Turners_-hall, under the care of their pastor, the Rev. Sayer Rhudd. Both churches agreed to assemble at Devonshire-square, but on condition that the public services should be held as they had been during the life-time of Mr. Mark Key, and without interrupting Mr. Richardson and the Pinners_-hall people at their stated seasons of worship. The church, at the period of its dissolution, consisted of a hundred and fifty-eight members, forty-six men and a hundred and twelve women. The history of this church will therefore include that of Turners_-hall after this period.

Mr. Toms, as a deacon and minister, took a prominent part in conducting the business of uniting the two churches. It is said, he pronounced a very seasonable and pertinent discourse concerning the nature and ends of church fellowship, asserting the independency of each church or congregation, and its power to transact within itself all affairs relating to the glory of God, and the edification of its members; for promoting which ends, they might not only form themselves into a body at first, but, if they should see occasion afterwards, dissolve, and give themselves up to another church, or otherwise, as they should see necessary to preserve the above-said ends._ There is no doubt that Christians are _called unto liberty,_ and that no man, or body of men, has any authority to prevent them from exercising in a church relation that liberty in any way _for

the glory of God, and their own edification._ But then it is equally clear, that they are _not to use that liberty for an occasion to the flesh,_ by indulging unwarranted fears respecting future difficulties; much less to pretend they have the glory of God in view when influenced by carnal motives, and for the accomplishment of covetous practices. *Great men are not always wise, neither do the aged understand judgment.*

It is very affecting to record the dissolution of any church of Christ, when the number of churches was so very few compared with the immense population of the city in which they were established. It may not be easy in every case to trace these events to their proper source: the instance before us presents difficulties not easily to be removed. It appears the church was numerous; I should judge much more numerous than that of Turners_-hall; and it appears also to have been united and respectable. There is reason to think, certainly, that the number of respectable ministers at that period was very small; but Mr. Andrew Gifford intimated that he would visit them after Christmas,—a person they had known and often heard among Mr. Richardson_s people, by whom it is probable he had been called to the ministry; and yet they resolved to invite the church at Turners_-hall to unite with them. They consulted the Society of Baptist Ministers, and proposed this query; _Whether the uniting of two congregations of Protestant Dissenters (both of the same faith and order) into one body or church, for the celebration of the ordinances of our dear Redeemer, and keeping their several offices, may be properly deemed a dissolution of both churches._ The ministers took time to consider the question, but declined giving any advice respecting it. It could not have been conjectured why so solemn a business was made of the dissolution of both churches, but for the following minute:— _The Lord_s day, April 16, 1727. The church being stayed after sermon, the messengers aforesaid, (five brethren) reported, that they had consulted the messengers from Mr. Rhudd_s church, and it did appear to them that there was no other way for Mrs. Humphrey_s legacy to be preserved, but by our giving up ourselves to that church._ Thus it appears, that the consideration of a paltry sum having been left to the church at Turner_s-hall, was sufficient to induce 158 members to dissolve the church which the excellent William Kiffin had _planted,_ and which had been _watered_ by the labours of those eminent ejected ministers, Thomas Patient, Daniel Dyke, and Richard Adams, and by the faithful Mark Key; the church which was the second in point of antiquity among the Particular Baptists in London; which had borne the rude storms of persecution under Laud, and from the prelates who succeeded him, in the times of Charles and James; which had prospered exceedingly, while the winds and storms of outward adversity shook its roots, and sometimes stripped off both its leaves and its branches; but which pined, and languished, and died, when left without a faithful pastor _to feed it with knowledge and with understanding._ When destitute of a pastor, and subject to the government of a few timid and it should seem worldly-minded deacons, two of whom were ministers, who probably were desirous of saving their money, which it was necessary for them to subscribe towards the support of a pastor, they resolved to sign their hands to the death-warrant that thus brought the church to destruction, after it had existed upwards of ninety years, and after they had been furnished by the liberality of their forefathers with so excellent a meeting-house,—a privilege which but few of our churches at that period possessed. The names of the 158 members who agreed to this act

of ecclesiastical felo-de-se, stand recorded on both the church books, as if Divine Providence had designed that a monument should be thus raised by themselves to perpetuate their memory, as a warning to succeeding generations, and to lead other churches to adopt the language and manifest the spirit of David, when he prayed, *‘If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning: if I do not remember thee, let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth; if I prefer not Jerusalem above my chief joy,’* Ps. 137:5, 6.

VOLUME III.

BOOK. II.

CHURCH IN PETTY FRANCE

1644: Church in Petty France.

The following accounts of Petty France appear in Stow and Maitland:– ‘Without the church-yard of St. Botolph, without Bishopsgate, is a causeway leading to a quadrant called *Petie France*, of Frenchmen dwelling there, and to other dwelling-houses, lately builded on the banke of the towne ditch by some citizens of London, that more regarded their own private gaine than the common goode of the citie.’ *Stowe’s Survey of London*, A.D. 1598, p. 92, 93. ‘Near these is the hospital of St. Mary of Bethlehem, upon the streets side northward from which many houses have been builded with alleys backward, of late time too much pestered with people (a great cause of infection) up to the Barres.’ *Ib.* p. 127. ‘Petty France, at the west end of Bishopsgate-street church-yard, and east side of Moorfields, (whereon the new streets are situate,) was a street of mean buildings, denominated Petty France, from its being inhabited by people of that nation.’ *Maitland*, p. 394.

1676: Mr. William Collins and Dr. Nehemiah Coxe.

There is no certain account of the pastors of the church in this place earlier than 1678, though it is very probable that it had existed before 1640, and that Mr. Edward Harrison, who signed the third edition of the *‘Confession of Faith,’* which had been published by seven churches in London, in 1644, was its pastor. This conjecture is founded upon the fact, that five persons of that name are among the members of the church in 1678. It appears from the index to the members, alphabetically arranged, entitled, *‘A Catalogue of the Names of the Members of the Church of Christ meeting at Petty France,’* first entered the 31st of the fifth month [July] 1676, and from thence continued, &c. that this church consisted of perhaps upwards of four hundred members; and during the period of about twenty-six years, it appears to have been in a high degree of spiritual prosperity. Mr. William Collins, and Dr. Nehemiah Coxe, (of whom accounts have been given in vol. ii. p. 397–407,) were solemnly ordained elders or pastors of this church, on the 21st of the 7th month, 1673. The former of these eminent ministers died Oct. 30, 1702; and the latter, a short time before the Revolution.

It appears from the records of this church, that during the ministry of Messrs. Collins and Coxe, it received members from, or had fellowship with, the following churches:—in London and its vicinity—Pinner's-hall; Battersea; Johnson-street; Gravel-lane, Wapping; Theobalds; Brentford; Joiners'-hall; Lorimers'-hall; Bagnio-court; Tallow-chandlers'-hall; Goat-street; Richmond; Flower-de-luce-court; Maze-pond; and Barbican. In the country—Norwich; Liverpool; Newcastle; Frome; Devizes; Oxford; Abingdon; Moreton in the Marsh; Hemel Hempstead; Southampton; Perton, near Salisbury; Warrington; St. Alban's; Hook-norton; Dorchester; Bristol; Sudbury; Rochester; Malmsbury; Reading; Newbury; York; Kensworth, Herts; Pirton; Alcester; Plymouth; Goldington, Bedfordshire; Coventry; Tannton; Wells; Luton; Eversholt; Bacup; Croydon; Warwick; Westbury; Newcastle; and Chichester: also in Cumberland; and in Dublin, and other parts of Ireland.

The following curious entry is made Dec. 24, 1676. _Mrs. Hart, and Hannah, that had been lately servant to brother Collins, did propound for baptisme, and were accepted; only the administration of the ordinance to them was deferred a while, *because by reason of the extremity of the present frost we could not now come at the water.*_

The eminence of Mr. William Collins as a scholar and theologian was very great. He is called by Mr. Piggott, that learned and judicious minister._ He had studied under the celebrated Dr. Busby, and gained his approbation. He had lived several years in France and Italy previously to his applying himself to theology in England. Nor was Dr. Nehemiah Coxe his inferior. Mr. Piggott, no mean authority, designates him _a very excellent, learned, and judicious divine._ The learned Dr. De Veil calls him, _that great divine, Nehemiah Coxe, eminent far all manner of learning,_ &c. The name of this _learned and judicious_ minister, of _this great divine,_ may be seen affixed to a letter, with those of twelve other of the London ministers, in our first volume, p. 417, on the subject of _Whether it was the duty of unconverted men to pray?_ This letter demands the attention of all persons, and especially of all ministers.

1677: Mr. William Collins and Dr. Nehemiah Coxe.

These were the distinguished scholars and divines that composed the _Baptist Confession of Faith,_ first published in 1677. The authority for attributing this work to these ministers rests upon the following minute in the records of the church in Petty France, August 26, 1677. _It was agreed, that a Confession of Faith, with the Appendix thereunto, having been read and considered by the brethren, should be published._

It should seem, therefore, that this confession was prepared for the purpose of expressing the faith of that particular church, but was adopted by upwards of one hundred churches at the General Assembly in 1689. It was also resolved, that it should be translated into Latin for the use of foreign churches; but it is likely that the premature death of Mr. Collins prevented the execution of that design. This confession may be considered as expressing the sentiments of the great body of Particular Baptist Ministers at the present day. It is an unexceptionable form of sound words, and is at an equal remove from Neonomianism and Antinomianism.

1678: Mr. William Collins and Dr. Nehemiah Coxe.

From the records of this church it appears, that many churches in town and country were in association after the year 1677. The first association appears to have been held at Hampstead, Herts, April 2, 1678. Dr. Coxe attended it, and, on his return, it is said, _gave an account of the comfortable issue of the meeting of the messengers of the associated churches, and of their desire that for the future some brethren on behalf of this and other congregations in the city, may be, as occasion is offered, appointed to assist them in their meetings,_ &c.

These associated churches appear to have met about every six months; and one or both the ministers of Petty France generally attended them, _to assist there,_ as the records say, _on behalf of the church._ The association met at the times and places following:—Abingdon, September 28, 1678; London, March 22, 1679; Hampstead, October 6, 1679; St. Alban_s, March 16, 1679-80; Abingdon, April 5, 1681; Hampstead, April 18, 1682; London, April 10, 1683.

The church soon after endured a great storm of persecution. Many of the Baptist ministers were imprisoned, and several died in prison.

On May 27, 1682, is this minute:— _Agreed also, in regard of the uncertainty of our obtaining conveniency of meeting as formerly by reason of the present persecution, and our exclusion from Petty France, that the contribution for the poor be made by monthly subscription, and our usual times of breaking bread be altered from three weeks to once every month, to be computed from this day._ It does not appear when the church assembled from this period up to December, 1687, there being an interruption in the records. After Mr. Collins and Mr. Coxe, and others, had rendered James II. the acceptable service of thanking him for his _declaration of liberty of conscience,_, in July 7, 1687, the Baptists were permitted to _return to their great meeting-houses._ The meeting-house in Petty France was one of those intended by that description.

1688: Mr. William Collins and Mr. Thomas Harrison.

The death of Mr. Coxe seems to have taken place in the beginning of June, 1689. The following entry shows both his poverty, and the Christian kindness of his brethren. _There was a meeting of the brethren at Brother Coxe_s, June 12, when it was agreed that something should be raised by subscription for the maintaining Brother Coxe_s son, and that this congregation should be moved in it._ At the death of this learned man, though, as it should seem, he left but one son, he was so totally unprovided for that a public subscription was made for his maintenance, among those who had already been stripped of the principal part of their substance by a persecuting hierarchy.

What is said of Mr. William Collins by the learned Mr. John Piggott may be properly introduced here;— _I shall not mention the encouraging offers he had to join with the national church, which he steadily refused; for it was conscience, not humour, that made him a Dissenter._

At the death of Mr. Coxe, one of the members of the church, who had been called to the ministry, Mr. Thomas Harrison, was invited to become an assistant to Mr. Collins. On July 7, 1689, he signified his willingness to accept the office, provided they would suffer him to continue his lecture at Pinners_-hall, to which the congregation consented.

1689, 1700: Mr. William Collins and Mr. Thomas Harrison.

In this year we find him attending Mr. Collins, and Mr. Collett, one of the deacons, as a messenger to the General Assembly at London, September 3, 1689. At the next church meeting, October 8, the following entry throws light upon the manner in which the churches were consulted by their messengers. It was agreed that the following question be put, viz. _Whether it be the opinion of the brethren, that the substance of the paper at the end of our late Assembly_s narrative,*

(_The Assembly of the Elders, Messengers, and Ministering Brethren, sent by, and concerned for, more than one hundred Baptized Congregations of the same Faith with themselves, from many parts of England and Wales, met together in London Sep. 3 to 12, 1689, to consider of several things relating to the well-being of the same Churches. And having that opportunity, judged it their Duty to clear themselves from those Reproaches cast on them, occasioned by the weakness of some few of their Persuasion, who in the late King_s Reign, were employed as Regulators for the Support of his Dispensing Power.*

_There having been many Reflections cast upon us, under the name of *Anabaptists*, as such, as having in the late Times, for our Liberties-sake, complied with the Popish Party, to the hazard of the Protestant Religion, and the Civil Liberties of the Nation: We being met together, some from most parts of this Kingdom, judge it our Duty to clear our selves from the said Reflections cast upon us. And we do first declare, that to the utmost of our Knowledge, there was not one Congregation that had a hand, or gave consent to any thing of that Nature, nor did ever countenance any of their Members to own an Absolute Power in the late King, to dispense with the Penal Laws and Tests; being well satisfied, that the doing thereof by his sole Prerogative, would lay the Foundation of the Destruction of the Protestant Religion, and Slavery to this Kingdom.

But we must confess, that some few Persons (from their own Sentiments) which were of our Societies, used their endeavours for the taking off the Penal Laws and Tests; and were employed by the late King *James* to go into divers Counties, and to several Corporations, to improve their Interest therein, but met with little or no Encouragement by any of our Members; though considering the Temptations some were under their Lives being in their Enemies Hands) the great Sufferings, by Imprisonments, Excommunications, &c. that did attend from the Ecclesiastical Courts, as also by the frequent Molestations of Informers against our Meetings, by means whereof many Families were ruined in their Estates, as also deprived of all our Liberties, and denied the common Justice of

the nation, by the Oaths and Perjury of the vilest of Mankind, might be some abatement to the severe Censures that have attended us, tho if some amongst us, in the hopes of a Deliverance from the heavy Bondage they then lay under, might miscarry, by falling in with the late King's Design. It being also well known that some Congregations have not only reprov'd those among them that were so employed, but in regular way have further proceeded against them. From whence it seems unreasonable, that for the miscarriage of a few Persons, the whole Party should be laid under Reproach and Infamy.

_It being our professed Judgment, and we on all Occasions shall manifest the same, to venture our *All* for the Protestant Religion, and Liberties of our Native Country.

_And we do with great Thankfulness to God acknowledge his special Goodness to these Nations, in raising up our present King *William*, to be a blessed instrument, in his Hand, to deliver us from Popery and Arbitrary Power, and shall always (as in duty bound) pray that the Lord may continue Him and His Royal Consort long to be a Blessing to these Kingdoms, and shall always be ready to the utmost of our ability, in our Places, to join our Hearts and Hands with the rest of our Protestant Brethren, for the Preservation of the Protestant Religion and the Liberties of the Nation.

<i>William Kiffin,</i>	<i>Benjamin Keach,</i>	<i>Thomas Winnel,</i>
<i>Hanserd Knowllys,</i>	<i>Samuel Buttall,</i>	<i>James Hitt,</i>
<i>Andrew Gifford,</i>	<i>Isaac Lamb,</i>	<i>Edward Price,</i>
<i>Robert Steed,</i>	<i>Christopher Price,</i>	<i>William Phips,</i>
<i>Thomas Vauxe,</i>	<i>Robert Keate,</i>	<i>William Facey,</i>
<i>John Tomkins,</i>	<i>Richard Tidmarsh,</i>	<i>John Ball,</i>
<i>Toby Wells,</i>	<i>James Webb,</i>	<i>William Hankins,</i>
<i>George Barret,</i>	<i>John Harris,</i>	<i>Paul Fruin._</i>

The reason why the church in Petty France decided against the expediency of printing the above document was, because Mr. William Collins was one of the ministers whose conduct it condemned. We see from it with what impartiality the business of the assembly was conducted. It is probable that it was submitted to all the churches, as well as to that in Petty France, and that a majority of voices determined the matter.)

referring to regulators and regulations, was a proper subject for their consideration, and the publication of that paper expedient?_ This was carried in the negative. The question was then put to the congregation. _Whether the money collected amongst them towards the general fund should have a distinct account kept of it, and be disposed of with their knowledge and consent;_ and it was carried in the affirmative.

A case of discipline was attended to in 1696, which serves to show the purity of the discipline of this church, and its regard to important doctrines. The following instance, copied from the records, in the year 1696, relates, it should appear, to one of the nine persons *

(* Of the nine persons, three belonged to the church in Petty France;—Messrs. John Collett, Robert Bristow, and Edward Harrison. This last gentleman lived at the Hen and the Chickens, Cheapside. Mr. Maurice King, also one of the treasurers, belonged to Devonshire-square; he was a silkman, and lived at the sign of the Mermaid, in Lawrence-lane.)

appointed as treasurers to the general fund in 1689, who doubtless was a gentleman of property, from his being appointed to that office. _Mr. Robert Bristow was rejected and cast out of the communion, after much patience exercised towards him, and strenuous endeavours used to recover him out of dangerous errors he was fallen into, viz. the renouncing the doctrine of the Trinity, and particularly the deity of Christ, and of the Holy Spirit, and so rooting up the very foundation of the Christian religion._ These were the views entertained by the great men who were the pastors of this church, respecting the rejection of the doctrine of the Trinity, and those doctrines which are inseparably connected with it,—the proper deity of the Son of God, and of the Holy Spirit. It appeared to them that Mr. Bristow_s errors were a total rejection and abandonment of Christianity; and therefore, notwithstanding his wealth and former consequence in the church, they excluded him from their communion. *A man that is a heretic, after the first and second admonition, reject; knowing that he that is such, is subverted, and sinneth, being condemned of himself.* Titus 3:10, 11.

1702: The Church removes to Artillery-lane.

In the year 1700 a dispute took place in this happy flourishing church in the subject of publicly singing the praises of God, which ended in a separation. This affair is thus noticed in the records:— _May 1, 1700, the brethren met to consider a paper delivered into the church concerning singing, and the bringing of it in to be practised in the church. After long discourse two questions were agreed upon;—the first, whether in order thereto the pastor should be desired to preach in favour of singing, which was carried in the negative._

In consequence of these disputes, Mr. Thomas Harrison and many of the people left, and took Lorimers_ Hall, at which place we shall have occasion again to speak of that excellent young minister.

Mr. William Collins was thus a second time left alone to fulfil all the pastoral duties. It appears that he and his friends who adhered to him were very decided, as they refused to recognize the separatists as a distinct church, or to dismiss any of their members to it.

It should appear that at this time the church was removed to the meeting-house, Artillery-lane, Spitalfields, a church-meeting being held there, April 30, 1701; so that the church must from this time be known as the church meeting in Artillery-lane, Spitalfields.

This is a well-built good-sized convenient meeting-house, capable of containing about six hundred persons. It was probably built by Mr. Collins's congregation, as there were many rich people belonging to it. It is to be regretted that this should have been built on a leasehold estate, as it is now, and has been for many years past, lost to the denomination.

1708: Death of Mr. William Collins.

Mr. William Collins lived but a short time after his congregation removed hither, as he died October 30, 1702. His last sermon was from Matthew 9:37, 38; *Then saith he unto his disciples, The harvest truly is plentious, but the labourers are few; pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth labourers into his harvest.* The following is an extract from Mr. Piggott's funeral sermon for him. That you that were under his care lay near his heart, and *how greatly he longed after you all in the bowels of Jesus Christ*, I am witness. I, did I say? The God in whose presence I stand, and at whose bar I must shortly appear, is witness. I speak this with so great solemnity, because he mentioned it to me with much affection and tears, and told me how glad he would have been to see you settled with a judicious learned minister before he died; but God saw meet to move him before this desirable thing was accomplished._ *

(* For more particulars of the life and death of this great man see vol. ii. pp. 395–403.)

I know nothing more of this church until the meeting of the General Assembly of thirteen churches in 1704, when it was destitute of a pastor. The messengers were Mr. Robert Cheney, Mr. Lionel Sharp, and Mr. James Pope, whose names are among the original members of the Church in Petty France in 1678,

This church was one of the ten associated churches in 1704 which held their general meeting at Joiners_-hall. Before this time Mr. Ebenezer Wilson had arrived in town from the church in Broadmead, Bristol. It is certain that he was settled as the pastor of this church; but the precise time is not known, there being, after the minute of June 7, 1692, at which time Mr. William Collins, the pastor, was prevented by illness from presiding at the church-meetings, a perfect blank respecting the church in Artillery-lane, Spitalfields. The fact appears to have been, that some time in the year 1708 the dispute respecting singing was revived, and Mr. Wilson taking part with the Anti-psalmodists, that the latter resolved on a separation from the church at Spitalfields, and obtained a meeting-house somewhere in Walbrook, where this part of the ancient church of Petty France will be again noticed, until we find it uniting with itself the still more ancient church in

Devonshire-square. The members who remained at Artillery-lane, after this separation, having invited Mr. Nathaniel Hodges, and his people at Lorimers_-hall, to unite with them, we must trace their history, after this time, in the united churches of Lorimers_-hall and Artillery-lane.

During the time the church assembled in Petty France, although it had been often shaken by the winds of persecution, it took firmer root, and it sent forth its branches to the sea, and its boughs to the rivers. It is not possible to ascertain how many ministers were called out from it, but it appears evident that the following were so:—Messrs. Edward Mann, who succeeded Col. Danvers in the church near Aldgate; Thomas Harrison, who assisted Mr. Collins; _____ Gamman, who was a minister at Chatham, (see account of his sufferings, vol. ii. p. 241;) Emanuel Gifford, pastor of the church in the Pithay, Bristol; Samuel Buttal, afterwards pastor at Plymouth; John Noble, of Tallow-chandlers_-hall; Dowgate-hill, London; and Nathaniel Hodges, afterwards of Artillery-lane.

VOLUME III.

BOOK. II.

CHURCH AT LORIMER_S-HALL *

(* A Lorimer is a bridle-maker.)

THIS meeting-house is thus described by Maitland, in his history of London:— _A small, but convenient hall, at London Wall._ It is supposed that Mr. John Taylor, who was rejected by the church in White_s-alley, Moorfields, on account of his having avowed Calvinistic sentiments, and who took this place in 1699, had either left it, or occupied it only once on the Lord_s day.

When Mr. Thomas Harrison left Mr. William Collins and his people in Petty France in 1700-1, many of that church, if not the great majority, seceded with him, on account of the church at Petty France having resolved that singing should not be introduced into public worship. This practice formed the feature by which this church was distinguished from their old friends, who soon after removed to Artillery-lane. Mr. Harrison, who appears to have been very eminent for talents, learning, zeal, and usefulness, was speedily removed from his labours. He died at age thirty-five, August 14, 1702, a few months before his venerable pastor, of whose church he became a member in the year 1676, at the age of twelve years. For a fuller account of him, taken from Mr. Piggott_s funeral sermon, see vol. ii. p. 407–412. Mr. Harrison, who will be again mentioned in the account of Pinners_-hall, preached a Lord_s day morning lecture there for several years.

1704: Mr. Nathaniel Hodges.

This church was without a pastor in April 1704, when the meeting of the General Assemble was held there for three days. Their messengers were Messrs. Robert Byand, George Richardson, and Richard Wilkinson. It is supposed that the Rev. Nathaniel

Hodges became the pastor of this church soon after 1704, and continued so till Mr. Ebenezer Wilson left Artillery-lane in 1708, as he and his people then united with that church, and from that time he was the pastor of the united churches of Lorimer_s-hall and Artillery-lane, until he relinquished his ministry.

Mr. Hodges had been educated with a view to the ministry at a Dissenting academy at Taunton. From thence in 1698, when twenty-three years of age, he accepted an invitation to settle as pastor with the church at Plymouth, where he resided three years. His name is signed to a manuscript letter before me, sent by the Western Association assembled at Taunton, June 17, 1701. In the following January, having (as the Plymouth records state it) _succeeded to earthly honours, he left the church, and settled in London._ It is likely he succeeded to some property, as he was, it is evident, of a rich family. He appears to have joined the church in Petty France under Mr. William Collins, and it is probable some of his relations were members of that church. The last entry in the handwriting of that excellent pastor records, June 7, 1702, that _brother Hodges was taken into the church._

Mr. Hodges has been already introduced to the reader as employed to present an Address to King George I, in 1715. A Tory newspaper writer, on that occasion, intimated that he had been brought up to a trade. _Cardinal Wolsey was of as mean extraction as these; and the principal of them, Mr. Hodges was of a trade that ought not to be thrown in his teeth, considering that it first afforded us that excellent astrologer, John Partridge, and has since given them so good a divine in the person of Mr. Hodges; to which holy science, that humble occupation has a more immediate tendency of its own nature, because it trains a man up regularly to the curing of soles.

1727: Death of Mr. Hodges.

Crosby says, _His uncle, a gentleman of a great estate, did not approve of his inclination to the study of divinity; and finding he could not be diverted therefrom, nor persuaded to join in the ministry of the established church, where he could have promoted him to some dignity, made him afterwards, as long as he lived, feel the smart of his resentment for his close adherence to what he believed to be truth. Upon the death of his uncle, *

(* Probably Sir William Hodges, an eminent Spanish merchant, and returned a Member of Parliament for St. Michael_s Mount, Cornwall, in 1705 and 1708. He died July 31, 1714, and was buried in the church of St. Catharine, Coleman-street, London. *Noble_s Contin. Of Granger_s Biographical History of England*, vol. ii. p. 207.)

when he became by inheritance possessed of a large estate, he laid down his ministry, and had the honour of knighthood conferred upon him by his Majesty George I. He died August 27, 1727, in the fifty-second year of his age, and lies buried in Stepney church-yard, where a fine monument is erected by his lady to his memory._

1727: Character of Mr. Hodges.

I find the name of this minister signed to a letter sent to Mr. Peart, of Bromsgrove, in Worcestershire, dated London, Sept. 10, 1717, in connection with those of Dr. John Gale, Messrs. Joseph Burroughs, and Benjamin Stinton. The subject of this was whether the Greek preposition in Matt. 3:16, which our translators had rendered *out* of the water, was rightly translated. It is evident from this letter, that Mr. Hodges was considered among his brethren as a person of respectable learning and good abilities.

Mr. Hodges was one of the non-subscribers at the synod at Salters_-hall in 1719, which is all the further information we have respecting his ministerial character. It is probable he laid down his ministry soon after that period, though it is not said at what time it was he received the honour of knighthood. Thus it appears that his _earthly honours_ eventually proved destructive to him, at least to his character as a minister. *

(* The apostle Paul was fully convinced of the dangers to which he was exposed, as it related to his ministerial engagements. _I keep under my body,_ said he, _and bring it into subjection; lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a cast-away,_ 1 Cor. 9:27. Neglecting to watch against the spirit of the world, Mr. Hodges seems to have exemplified the necessity of that care, as well as to be a standing monument of the awful denunciation in Zechariah against the idol shepherd, &c. ch. xi. 17.)

So true is it, that *it is hard for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God*. It is a very affecting thing that he who, when young, chose rather to suffer his rich uncle_s displeasure than to violate his conscience and abandon his principles, should, after he was forty years of age, be carried away with the deceitfulness of riches, and the lust of other things, and this become unfruitful. It is not said what became of the _large estate,_ at his death, except that a part of it was expended in erecting a fine monument over his renowned dust! We have never heard that he left any part of his money to the poor of Christ_s flock, or to any charitable institution.

Thus terminated the _earthly honours_ of Sir Nathaniel Hodges; the only Baptist minister of whom we have heard that he received the honour of knighthood; the only Baptist minister who laid down his ministry on account of his being elevated to the rank of a knight, and, like Demas; deserted his friends, having lived this present world. Such instances are indeed rare; but they are deeply affecting, and should teach all ministers, especially if they are rich, or expect to possess riches, earnestly to pray that they may be preserved from the *love* of money, the root of all evil. The following is the inscription upon what Crosby calls the _fine monument._ By comparing it with those on the tombs of his contemporaries, Joseph Stennett, Edward Wallin, and others, the reader may be able to judge who possessed the greater honour. Under the coat of arms is this inscription:—

Sr. Nathl. Hodges, Knt.

Of Bethnall Green.

Obt. The 27th of August, 1727.

Aetatis 52.

1726 to 1756: Dr. Kinch, Mr. Weatherley, and Dr. Jefferies.

After the resignation of Mr. Hodges, the church chose as his successor Dr. Kinch, (of the medical profession, as I suppose,) who was a member of the church in Paul_s-alley, Barbican, was called by them to the work of the ministry in 1720, and was settled as pastor here, on April 26, 1721. When the General Body was formed in 1727, he was one of the first committee. He was one of a deputation from that Body to carry an address to court in 1727. In April, 1731, he was reported at the Library as having died during the past year.

Mr., John Weatherley succeeded Dr. Kinch. He had been educated by Mr. Grove, of Taunton, and was a man much respected. A discourse preached at Barbican, 1750, entitled _Irreligion the Ground of God_s Displeasure,_ was his only publication. I find his name in the list of approved ministers of the three denominations in 1732. He died soon after preaching the sermon above mentioned.

He was succeeded by Dr. Joseph Jefferies. He is first mentioned as belonging to Pinners_-hall in the minutes of the General Body, in 1756. He probably preached one part of the day there, and the other at Artillery-lane. He died suddenly in 1783, as he was returning from Mr. Noble_s funeral.

The remains of this church removed to Worship-street, and it was dissolved about the year 1800. It is very affecting to find that any part of a church which at one period was so zealous for the orthodox doctrines of the Trinity, and the proper divinity of our Lord Jesus Christ, and that of the Holy Spirit, (see the account of the church in Petty France, p. 337,) should have been at length swallowed up in the vortex of Socinianism At what period its ministers became Arians or Socinians is not exactly known; but it was certainly considered a Trinitarian church in the year 1719 because it was invited to unite with the Baptist Fund when the church in Barbican was refused.

VOLUME III.

BOOK. II.

1707: Church in Walbrook.

CHURCH IN WALBROOK.

I HAVE not been able to ascertain what was the place of worship which the separatists from the church at Spitalfields, formerly under the care of Mr. William Collins, obtained for public worship, but it was situated in Walbrook.

It is apprehended that these were a minority of the members, though they kept possession of the old church records, probably taking out from the book those which related to the church since it had met in Artillery-lane; it is certain, however, with that exception, that the records comprehend the history of the church from 1676 till the time it received into connection the church in Devonshire-square, at which place it continues to assemble.

The records of the separated church are thus described:—_A catalogue of the names of the members of the church now meeting in Walbrook, under the care of the Rev. E. Wilson._ Then follow the names of about 120 persons, men and women. After the names are entered alphabetically, at the opposite end of the Petty France church-book, is added, _A record of the acts of the church, commencing January 4, 1707-8.

1708: Mr. Ebenezer Wilson.

It is evident that Mr. Crosby has, in his account of Mr. Ebenezer Wilson and his congregation, confounded the two separations which took place in the church of Petty France. He says, _At the death of Mr. William Collins, pastor of an ancient congregation in Spitalfields, that church agreed to unite with a small church that met at Lorimers_-hall, and to bring in the practice of singing psalms, which had not heretofore been used among them. They chose Mr. Nathaniel Hodges to be pastor of the united churches._

The separation here spoken of was from the church in Petty France, in 1692, before it removed to Spitalfields. Mr. Hodges was chosen, probably to succeed Mr. Thomas Harrison, at Lorimers_-hall, some time after 1704. Mr. Crosby adds, _Several members of the ancient church, and some of considerable ability, were displeased at the practice of singing psalms, and separated from the rest, claiming to themselves the title of the church, because they stood by the ancient constitution and settlement. These, resolving to keep up their church state and public worship, invited Mr. Ebenezer Wilson to come to them from Bristol, and soon after chose him to be their pastor._ Now, upon the supposition that the church in Artillery-lane, Spitalfields, chose Mr. Wilson in 1705, then the separation, of which Mr. Crosby speaks, took place between that period and January 1707-8, and every thing becomes plain. After Mr. Wilson and his friends, who were anti-psalmodists, had left Artillery-lane, they who remained seem to have been joined by the people of Lorimers_-hall, who were also for public singing; and Mr. Nathaniel Hodges, the pastor at Lorimers_-hall, became the pastor of the united churches.

1712: Mr. Ebenezer Wilson.

The records mention several acts of the church at its commencement in Walbrook, which indicate a prosperous state June 6, 1708, they agreed to establish a prayer-meeting on a Lord_s-day morning _before the public work, as convenient and useful._ *

(* In June, 1712, it was allowed that _those brethren who had opportunity, and whose hearts the Lord should open, might have the use of the little room for prayer every Lord_s day morning before sermon.)

They appointed messengers to converse with a woman that had been deluded by the French prophets, who at this time made a noise in the nation. At the next meeting, July 29, they excluded her from their fellowship, for having left her place in the church a year and a half; for refusing to hearken to frequent admonitions; and _for following those deluded people called the French prophets, whose prophetic speeches, warnings, &c. for want of accomplishment, besides their blasphemous expressions in print and otherwise, are plain proofs that they are not sent of God._ The last entry by Mr. Ebenezer Wilson in the church-book, is on September 5, 1712.

The late Rev. Joshua Thompson, in his manuscripts, speaking of Mr. Wilson, says, _He kept a school at Bristol, and was a man of great learning._ He was an assistant to Mr. Thomas Vauxe; and during the period of his ministry the handsome large meeting-house in Broadmead was built in 1695. He was the son of Mr. John Wilson, pastor of the church at Hitchin, and was educated under the care of the celebrated Mr. Timothy Jollie, at Sheffield, in Yorkshire. On leaving the academy, he was invited to assist Mr. George Fownes, of Bristol, who died in 1685. Mr. Wilson married the daughter of that excellent man; and perhaps, in addition to his labours, in assisting Mr. Vauxe and preaching to the church, he might keep a boarding-school for the support of his family. He attended the Western Association until the year 1704, and after this removed to London, as has been already stated.

Mr. Crosby says, of Mr. Wilson, _Though he was a worthy man, and a scholar, yet he was not a popular preacher; and as the people were but few in number, so they continued: yet he had a tolerable maintenance from them. Some of them being rich, and he being generally respected, they contributed largely for his support._

Mr. Wilson died in 1714, and his funeral sermon was preached, but not published, by the Rev. Edward Wallin. He left behind him a widow and seven children, one of whom was Mr. Samuel Wilson, afterwards the respectable pastor of the church in Prescott-street, Goodman_s-fields. In the funeral sermon for Mr. Samuel Wilson, by Dr. Gill, he says, _He was the son of the Rev. Ebenezer Wilson, a worthy minister of Christ in this city._

After the death of Mr. Ebenezer Wilson, the church left Walbrook, and in June, 1716, went to Turners_-hall.

VOLUME III.

BOOK. II.

CHURCH AT TURNERS_-HALL

1688: Mr. Richard Allen.

THIS place was situated in Philpot-lane, which reaches from Fenchurch-street, north, to Little Eastcheap, south, part lying in Langbourn-ward, and the greater part in Billingsgate-ward. It was occupied in 1688 by Mr. Richard Allen, a respectable Baptist minister, who was originally a member of the Baptist church in White-s-alley, Moorfields. That church was one of those which belonged neither to the Particular nor General Baptists, but was distinguished as _owning the principles mentioned Hebrews 6:2;_ *

(* The reader may find more information on this subject, under the article _Churches of the Six Principles._)

amongst which, as the reader will recollect is found *the laying on of hands*. To the practice of laying on of hands on baptized believers, this and several other churches adhered with very rigid tenacity. Mr. Allen had his doubts whether this institution ought to be made a term of communion, and thought it was a matter that should be considered as indifferent, or at least respecting which forbearance should be exercised, as he questioned whether it was a rite of divine institution in relation to church-fellowship. As he did not keep his opinion private, but declared it openly in the church, it gave so much offence to the other members, that they at length convened the representatives of several other churches to consider this important matter. At an assembly of these churches held at White-street, June 18, 1688, they came to the following grave decision;– _Forasmuch as brother Allen hath this present day, and at several other times, and upon several occasions, denied the ordinance of laying on of hands upon baptized believers to be a principle of Christ_s doctrine; whereof complaint has been made, and the matter several times debated, at several church meetings, and adjourned to this day, _Whether, brother Allen having declared his opinion against this ordinance, it be for the preservation of the truths of the gospel and the peace of the church that brother Allen shall continue in the ministry as a preacher among us; upon debate of the matter by the elders of the several congregation in communion with us, and of the church now assembled about this matter, the church of Christ do hereby unanimously agree, that brother Allen be for the present suspended from being a minister among us._

Mr. Allen, it should seem, did not wait to know whether his suspension would be removed, but retired to Turners_-hall, where he preached to a small but affectionate congregation, until he removed, with his people, to the church in Barbican, where he succeeded Mr. Thomas Plant in 1695. *

(* Turners_-hall was used for several years by Mr. George Keith, who left the Quakers; and then by Mr. Jacob Jacobs, an Independent.)

In the memoirs of that church he will again be introduced to the reader_s notice.

The church at Petty France, formerly under the care of Mr. William Collins, which had, since the settlement of Mr. Ebenezer Wilson in 1704-5, been meeting in Walbrook, removed in August 1715 to Turners_-hall.

1716: Mr. Thomas Dewhirst.

The records were broken off in September, 1712, after which we find no minute till July, 1716, when it is said, _Brother Sharp, being deacon, died._ This was Mr. Lionel Sharp, who was a member of the original church in Petty France in 1675, and has been mentioned as a messenger to the assembly of 1704. It is added, _after which brother Thomas Dewhirst being recommended by the church of Christ meeting at Bacup, in Lancashire, under the care of Mr. Richard Ashworth, we having had before one year_s trial of his gifts for the ministry, received him among us as member, August 19, and then gave him a call for the further trial of his gifts._

From the next minute it would seem, that more is intended than appears at first sight, when it was said, _Brother Sharp, *being deacon, died*_;_ the records thus proceeding: _The church, *being destitute of deacons*, proceeded to election, when our beloved brethren Samuel Humphreys and Benjamin Wilmott were chosen and set apart for that work; and the same day we gave our brother Thomas Dewhirst a call to the pastoral office over us._

The circumstance of Mr. Sharp_s having been the only deacon of the church, and the immediate choice both of pastor and deacons being made to hinge upon his death, lead to the conclusion, that he was one of the _domineering brethren,_ who have often been found in our churches, bearing the name, but abusing the office of deacon. Men of this stamp, forgetting that they were appointed to relieve the pastor from the weight of secular concerns and worldly care, and to see that the poor of the flock be not neglected, have after a few years, especially if there have been frequent changes of pastors, grown up to such consequence in a church, that the people have been either afraid to resist their proposals, or contradict their decisions, and thus have not been able to choose other men to the office, nor even to obtain the settlement of a pastor. In the instance before us Mr. Dewhirst had been preaching a whole year; but this Diotrephes, _being deacon,_ and the *only* deacon, would not suffer him to be settled as pastor: and though they had among them their _beloved brethren Samuel Humphreys and Benjamin Willmott,_ yet they could not be chosen as deacons till the time was come for Mr. Lionel Sharp to die; when it should seem, after being forty years a member, and a great part of that time a deacon of the church, his death was considered as a deliverance from bondage, rather than as a matter for regret and lamentation. *

(* The office of deacon in our churches will necessarily give a man much influence if he should live forty years in that office. If this be used in filling _the office of a deacon well,_ such a man is a great blessing to the church: but if it be employed in the spirit of a Diotrephes, no man can be a greater curse. The church should never suffer the number of deacons to be reduced so low as two, lest the survivor of these should refuse to unite with any other brother, and

should do every thing himself; or rather should neglect every thing, as it is evident Mr. Lionel Sharp did, who, it appears kept the church, from the death of Mr. Wilson, from meeting to transact business. The church becomes _the house of bondage,_ until such unworthy men are removed by death from an office, which they will neither fill nor relinquish.)

Mr. Dewhirst was ordained to the pastoral office, August 29, 1716. The manner in which it was conducted is thus stated. _The church beginning in prayer among themselves, by the consent of the church Mr. Edward Wallin, being pastor of a sister church, was made choice of to open the nature of the work of the day. When that was done, a brother of the church began in prayer publicly; after which the church chose the aforesaid Mr. Wallin to be their mouth in ordination: which ordination being performed by the extension of hands, another brother closed the work of ordination with prayer. Brother Mark Key, pastor of a sister church, gave a word of exhortation to our pastor; and likewise brother John Skepp, pastor of a sister church, gave a word of exhortation to the church; brother Dewhirst closed the work of the day with prayer._

1720: Mr. Thomas Dewhirst.

I find that the next year 1717, this church agreed to have an interest in the baptizing-place, Horselydown, and paid L10 to Mr. Benjamin Stinton towards the expense of repairing that old building. They also resolved in October in that year, that a weekly meeting of prayer should be held at some of their houses, _to beg of God that he would bless us as one of his little tribes in his dear Israel, and that he would revive us._ From this it should appear that the church was now reduced to a low condition, and that the members began to feel the necessity of praying for the influence of the Holy Spirit to bless the ministry to their edification, and to the conversion of sinners. It may be hoped that the proposed meeting was an extraordinary meeting for prayer. If the church had been without a weekly meeting for united prayer and supplications, their declension was not marvellous. The church after this appears to have increased, several persons being baptized: discipline, likewise, was attended to, and _wicked persons were put away from among them._

In the year 1717 the _Baptist Fund_ was established, and in 1720 the church at Turners_-hall appears to have united in it by appointing Mr. Humphrey their messenger. The records contain a statement of a measure adopted soon after, by the managers, to appropriate L300 South Sea Stock, and the interest arising from it, _for the specific purpose of educating young ministers of the Particular persuasion, who have been baptized in water._ It was further determined that the person so educated should be one who is _joined to a church of the denomination; who has so far exercised his gift with them, as that they may judge he hath promising ministerial abilities; and who is recommended by them as one sound in faith and conversation._

The name of Mr. Dewhirst is found among those of the subscribing ministers at the Salters_-hall controversy in 1719. There are no other particulars of him that I am

acquainted with. He does not appear to have attained to any eminence among the churches during the seven or eight years that he was the pastor of this church.

There is no account of the manner in which Mr. Dewhirst closed his ministry; but July 5, 1723, I find Mr. Edward Wallin was requested to preach once a day for some time at Turners_-hall, in Philpot-lane.

1726: Mr. Sayer Rhudd.

There was no successor to Mr. Dewhirst until 1726, when Mr. Sayer Rhudd was called to the pastoral office. This he accepted May 23, 1725, and being regularly dismissed from Mr. Wallin_s church in Fleur-de-lis Yard, he was _publicly set apart to his office by laying on of hands and prayers, with the assistance of the elders of several of the baptized churches in London of the Particular Baptist denomination._ Mr. Hammon was also set apart to the office of deacon at the same time.

At the close of the year 1726, the church in Devonshire-square signified a wish, that the church at Turners_-hall would unite with them, and that Mr. Rhudd might become the pastor of the two churches to assemble in future in Devonshire-square. On December 25, 1726, two messengers, Messrs. Blackwell and Webb, delivered the following message in writing:– _Brethren and sisters, we, as messengers from the church of Christ meeting in Devonshire-square, late under the pastoral care of Mr. Mark Key, deceased, to this church of Christ under the pastoral care of Mr. Sayer Rhudd, request, that you will please to remove from the place of your meeting to that of Devonshire-square, (each church keeping up its church-state for some time,) till a union of both may be agreed upon to mutual satisfaction; and that our brother Rhudd be the pastor over the whole community. To which our request we hope for a favourable answer._

1727: Mr. John Rhudd.

The messengers being withdrawn, and the church having approved their application, they were on their return informed by Mr. Rhudd _That they took the invitation kindly, and designed, God willing, to meet with them in Devonshire-square Lord_s day se_nnight._

During the interval, Mr. John Rhudd, a brother of the pastor, who had spoken several times before the church, was called to the work of the ministry, April 5, 1727.

At the time appointed they accordingly removed to Devonshire-square; and, after much arrangement and many regulations, the church in Devonshire-square having dissolved its church state, as has before been related, Mr. Rhudd thus addressed the church at Turners_-hall:– _My brethren and sisters, I am now to address myself to you, over whom the providence of God has placed me as overseer. You have been witnesses of what has passed on the part of this church, late under the pastoral care of Mr. Mark Key, deceased. They have dissolved their church state, and now offer themselves for communion to you; and forasmuch as you have already signified your readiness to receive them into your

communion by giving them an invitation, your silence now is a sufficient testimony that you recognize and confirm your satisfaction in admitting them as members with you._

In consequence of this union of two churches belonging to the Baptist fund, they agreed to assert their right in it, and to send a competent number of messengers. These were Messrs. Toms, Bowler, Clarke, and Hammon: the fund agreed to receive four messengers for that year, but resolved not to admit more than three in future.

After this the union was completed by the celebration of the Lord_s Supper; and the history of these churches must in future be considered as those of Devonshire-square and Turners_-hall.

VOLUME III.

BOOK. II.

1727: United Churches of Devonshire-square and Turners_-hall.

UNITED CHURCHES OF DEVONSHIRE-SQUARE AND TURNERS_-HALL.

SAYER RHUDD, M. D. was in December, 1727, recognized as the pastor of this church, formed of the members of the two churches above-mentioned The church consisted of perhaps two hundred and fifty members. But this plan of accommodation did not promote the spiritual prosperity of the church. Only about six years had elapsed, when, in April 1733, Mr. Rhudd signified his intention of visiting France, which step the church refused to sanction. Notwithstanding this refusal, and their earnest remonstrances, he the next month put his design into execution_ and the church, resenting his disrespectful treatment, agreed that his salary should be withheld till he gave them satisfaction. His connection with this church was consequently dissolved; but we shall have to speak of him again under the articles of Westminster and Snow_s-fields.

1734: Mr. George Braithwaite.

George Braithwaite, M. A. succeeded Mr. Rhudd. He was ordained March 28, 1734, when Dr. Gill gave the charge to the minister from 2 Tim. iv. 16; and Mr. Samuel Wilson preached to the people from Heb. 13:17. *

(* These sermons which had been previously delivered on a similar occasion were printed: the former with the title of _The Duty of a Pastor to his People,_ and the latter entitled, _The Duty of the People to their Pastor._)

Mr. Braithwaite was born in the year 1681, at Fornacefells in Lancashire. He was intended from his infancy, by his parents and rich relations, to be a minister of the church of England, with a view to his ultimately succeeding his uncle, who was a celebrated

preacher in that part of the kingdom, He was first sent to a grammar school near his native place; then to a noted seminary in Yorkshire; and finally to the University of Oxford. There he attended the various lectures, and the usual course of college exercises, and from his diligent application to his studies procured the degree of Master of Arts. The illness of a near relation occasioned his going home, and different circumstances prevented him from returning to Oxford.

It was in youth that he became a partaker of divine grace; and he soon after embraced the sentiments of the Baptists, before he knew that there were any people in the world who held the necessity of a credible profession of faith in order to baptism, and that immersion in water was the only scriptural mode in which that ordinance should be administered. He became a member of the church at Cripplegate, at the time that his countryman, Mr. David Crossley, was its pastor.

By this church his gifts for the work of the ministry were exercised; and, on being satisfied that he had received gifts for edifying the body of Christ, they solemnly, on a day of fasting and prayer, sent him forth _to testify the glorious gospel of the blessed God, wherever God in his providence might open a door to him for executing that sacred office.

His relations and friends, desirous of drawing him away from the despised Dissenters, made him very considerable offers if he would conform to the church of England; but having acted from conviction in refusing to submit to the imposition of articles of faith upon his conscience, he decidedly and promptly sacrificed all the prospects of worldly advantage and secular honours, that he might serve God with his spirit in the gospel of Jesus Christ.

1736: Mr. George Braithwaite.

He determined, when he was first awakened to a sense of his lost condition as a sinner, and had tasted that the Lord was gracious, if God, counting him faithful, should put him into the ministry, _that he would devote the first fruits of his labours to the poor and ignorant people of his native country. He therefore went into Lancashire; and, a divine blessing attending his ministry, he gathered a church. It is not said where this was; but in 1724 he preached to the church at Tottlebank. While here, he sold a house to the people who met at Torver (or Tower) and Caniston, and they converted it into the meeting-house of Hawkshead-hill. In this place he preached two or three years, supplying also that at Sunnybank, in Torver parish. After this he preached for several years at Bridlington in Yorkshire, with great reputation and success. While here he had to bear his testimony (which he did with great zeal) against prevailing intemperance. He published on this occasion a work entitled, _The Nation_s Reproach, and the Church_s Grief; or a serious needful Word of Alarm to those who needlessly frequent Taverns and Public Houses, and often spend the evening there. In a Letter to my Neighbours and Countrymen._ His

faithful dealing in this letter procured him many enemies, even in his congregation, so that his situation as pastor became uneasy. This being known to his friends in London, they introduced him to the knowledge of the church in Devonshire-square. After preaching to them for a few months they invited him to undertake the pastoral office, which he accepted.

Mr. Braithwaite was now fifty-three years of age; and, ripened by age and experience, he entered upon his work in the church with affectionate zeal; and his ministry was highly acceptable, and not without considerable success.

He published a sermon which he preached at Devonshire-square Dec. 19, 1736, occasioned by the death of Mr. Humphrey Frend. This was entitled, *‘The Saints’ Desire in Time, and Happiness in Eternity;’* founded upon Ps. 117:15:—*As for me, I shall behold thy face in righteousness, &c.* Mr. Frend was not a member of Devonshire-square church at the time of its dissolution.

1741: Mr. George Braithwaite.

In 1741 he published another funeral sermon, preached at Devonshire-square Aug. 30, on account of the death of Mrs. Mary Newnham. This was founded on 1 John v. 4, and is entitled, *‘The Conflicts and Conquests of the born of God; or Faith’s Victory and Triumph over the World.’* Mrs. Newnham was either a member of the church at Turners_-hall before the union took place, or joined the church under the ministry of Mr. Braithwaite.

This excellent man was in the habit of writing a diary for upwards of thirty-two years, in which he endeavoured to keep an exact account of the frame of his spirit, in the closet, the family, and the world. From this account, which was read after his death, it appears that he had been enabled to maintain a close walk with God. The pious reflections with which it is interspersed discover the breathings of a truly devotional and serious mind. His preaching was plain, serious, and affectionate; and in his public prayers, his gift was remarkable. In this exercise he was distinguished for a holy opportunity, and expressed himself with so much fervour, that his manner was thought to have injured his constitution. In his conversation he was friendly, affable, and courteous, and took every opportunity of introducing something that might tend to edification. His temper was naturally warm, and this led him occasionally to speak unadvisedly with his lips; but he was sensible of this, and would often acknowledge it with regret and sorrow. His worldly circumstances, in the former part of his life, were easy and abundant; but he had never received much for his labours, and the expenses of bringing up a large family had greatly reduced them. In the latter part of his ministry he met with some sharp and unexpected trials, which greatly affected his spirits, and tended in no small degree to break his constitution, which was naturally good. He lived long enough, however, to see the clouds gradually disperse; for which he heartily thanked God not long before his death.

1748: Death of Mr. Braithwaite.

His decay was gentle and gradual, and for the most part without pain or sickness. His understanding was clear and unclouded; his conversation heavenly; and his satisfaction as to a better world, full and uninterrupted. He would say to the honour of sovereign grace, he had no fears, no doubts, and longed to be at home, *where the wicked cease from troubling, and where the weary soul is at rest*. At length it pleased God to grant him his desire to depart and be with Christ. His death was so very easy, that, without a figure, he might be said to fall asleep in Jesus, July 19, 1748, in the sixty-seventh year of his age, having been in the ministry more than forty years, the last fourteen of which were spent in the service of the church and congregation at Devonshire-square.

He was buried in Bunhill-fields, and his funeral sermon was preached at his late place of worship, July 24, by Mr. Samuel Wilson, pastor of the church in Prescott-street. The text is, 2 Tim. 4:7, 8. *I have fought a good fight, &c.* which passage of Scripture had been selected by Mr. Braithwaite.

In this sermon, from whence most of the above particulars have been extracted, Mr. Wilson says respecting his deceased friend; _I persuade myself that every one who was acquainted with the remarkable modesty and humility of the Rev. George Braithwaite, deceased, will readily acquit him from the charge of vanity in the choice of these words as the subject of his funeral discourse. I shall not easily forget the serious and very affectionate manner in which, a little before his death, he spoke to me upon this head, _My dear brother,_ said he, (for that was the manner of the good man, always warm and pathetic,) _I have nothing to boast of; far be it from me; but I bless God, he has, through his grace, enabled me in a measure to be faithful. And I look upon it as a singular mercy, that I have not to charge myself in a single instance, in which I have been left to baulk my conscience, as to any one truth of the gospel, or ordinance of Christ, out of fear or in favour of man._ Glorious mercy! (adds Mr. Wilson,) to have in the view of eternity, the testimony of a good conscience, that in simplicity and godly sincerity he had had his conversation in this world; and at the same time to see his obligation to a higher hand, and thankfully to acknowledge that by the grace of God he was what he was._

The church in Devonshire is at present under the ministry of Mr. Timothy Thomas.

VOLUME III.

BOOK. II.

CURRIERS_-HALL, CRIPPLEGATE

THIS church was that which had been collected by the Rev. Hansard Knollys. At the time of his death, September 19, 1691, it assembled at Broken Wharf, Thames-street; at which meeting-house it is understood the meetings of the General Assemblies from 1689 to 1692 were held. *

(* As Mr. Knollys has been stigmatized as of fifth-monarchy principles, and as the sentiments of many godly ministers upon that subject are but little known,

the following extract from one of his works will explain them:—_That the next glorious appearance of the Lord Jesus Christ, will be his virtual and spiritual coming in his saints and sanction (as the Bridegroom of his church) to marry her sons, (Isa. 62:4, 5) and by them to reign over the nations with power and great glory a thousand years here on earth, Dan. 7:27. There are but *three* special kinds and times of Christ_s coming. 1. His coming in the form of a servant in the days of his flesh, Phil. 2:9. 2. His coming as Judge at the last day, when he shall judge the quick and the dead, (2 Tim. 4:1,) called his second appearance the second time, Heb. 9:29. Both these are his personal appearances, or his coming in his own person. But between these two appearances, or comings of Christ in his own person, there is witnessed by the holy prophets and apostles, and recorded in the holy Scriptures of truth, another kind of Christ_s coming at another time. And that is his coming as the Bridegroom, and as the only Potentate, King of kings, and Lord of lords, (1 Tim. 6:14, 15. Rev. 19:16;) which is his virtual, spiritual. Powerful, and glorious coming in his saints and sanction, and by them to marry his Jerusalem, Isa. 62:4, 5, *so shall thy sons marry thee*, and with them to reign over the nations and kingdoms of the world a thousand years on earth, Rev. 11:15-17._)

1691 to 1705: Mr. Steed, Mr. Claridge, and Mr. Crossley.

After the decease of its venerable pastor, Mr. Robert Steed succeeded till 1703, and in his time the church removed to Bagnio-court, Newgate-street, where they assembled in 1705. Soon after this they removed to Curriers_-hall, better known by the name of Cripplegate meeting, where they assembled for nearly a century. The lease expiring in 1799, the congregation, which was then greatly reduced, was unable to renew the lease, and they engaged the meeting-house in Red Cross-street, close to Dr. Williams_s Library.

Mr. Richard Claridge assisted Mr. Steed: he had been a parish minister at Poppleton; he soon after, 1700, embraced the sentiments of the people called Quakers. While a Baptist he united with Mr. Kiffin in recommending the little work on Baptism by Mr. John Norcot.

1705: Mr. David Crossley.

Mr. David Crossley succeeded Mr. Steed in 1705; and served the church a few years. He was originally of Barnoldswick, in Craven, Yorkshire. He was baptized August 6, 1692, by Mr. John Eckells, of Bromsgrove in Worcestershire, and became a member of the church under his care. He was called to the work of the ministry September 26, 1792. As a letter of recommendation that was given him upon his being called to the ministry is not only curious, but is probably a specimen of the manner usually adopted by our churches at that period, it has been thought worth inserting.

_A letter of recommendation given to brother David Crossley, sending him forth to the ministry, viz.

_To the churches of Christ baptized upon profession of their faith. The church of Christ at Bromsgrove, in the county of Worcestershire, prayeth, that grace, mercy, and truth, may be multiplied unto you from God the Father through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Whereas it hath pleased our heavenly Father to give the spirit of grace and divine illumination to our dear brother David Crossley, which hath so powerfully wrought upon him, that, having received from the Lord abundant satisfaction touching the ordinance of believers baptism, he was, upon profession of his faith towards God, and repentance from dead works, baptized by our revered pastor John Eckells, at Bromsgrove, the 10th day of the sixth month, 1692, and is in full communion with us in the things of the Lord Jesus; and having had a sufficient proof of the grace and gift of God bestowed upon him, and adjudging him to be a person fitly qualified for preaching the gospel and baptizing, (though, alas! who is sufficient for these things?) we, by virtue of authority given us by the Lord Jesus Christ, have called our brother forth to preach the gospel and baptize, wheresoever the providence of God shall open a door to his ministry. And that his labours may be blessed from above with suitable success, we commend him to God, from whom comes every good and perfect gift, begging that he will give a mighty increase to his endeavours in the Lord. Amen.

_Signed the 26th of the seventh month, 1692, in the name of the church,

JOHN ECKELLS, Pastor,_

(and several others.)

When Mr. Crossley quitted London, probably about 1710, he went into the north of England, and was for several years pastor of the church at Tottlebank, Lancashire. He was a very popular minister, and was instrumental in gathering three or four churches. It must not be disguised, though it leaves the name and character of this popular useful minister under a cloud, that he degraded his sacred office by falling into some awful sin, for which he was compelled to discontinue preaching the gospel. At an association of Baptist churches held at Rawden, May 1719, one of their minutes records as follows: _Mr. David Crossley, who had been an eminent minister, but who had been for some time guilty of scandalous sins, was called before the ministers, who with the deepest compassion reproved him. He seemed both sensible and sorrowful; and the ministers set apart seven days for prayer with him._ In the year 1724 he was still considered a disorderly minister, and not any of the London ministers would undertake to apply to the Fund on his behalf. Just at the close of his life, he maintained a correspondence with the justly celebrated George Whitfield. That extraordinary minister wrote a recommendation to two treatises of Mr. Crossley's, signed July 29, 1744; from this it should seem that his character as a reputable minister was re-established. He died in September, 1744, aged seventy-five, having kept a school for his support in his old age. He is reputed to have been the largest man in the county. He was buried at Goodshaw. Some further particulars of Mr. Crossley will be given in the account of the church at Bacup, Lancashire, from the

Appendix to the Memoirs of the Rev. John Hirst, who died in 1815, by the Rev. James Hargreaves.

1715: Mr. John Skepp.

JOHN SKEPP. It does not appear at what time exactly this worthy minister was chosen to succeed Mr. Crossley at Cripplegate; he was pastor of the church in 1715, how much sooner does not appear. He had been a member of the church at Cambridge, under the ministry of the famous Mr. Joseph Hussey. From the account of Mr. Hussey, it should seem that he had pressed himself into the ministry not only without the consent of the pastor and the church, but in opposition to their united opinions. However this might have been, (and if such irregularity of conduct was manifested by him, we shall not attempt to justify it,) he became an excellent servant of Christ. This assertion is founded upon the following testimony of Dr. Gill to his character. _Mr. John Skepp was a man of singular talents and abilities; of very quick, strong natural parts; of great diligence and industry in acquiring useful knowledge; a warm and lively preacher of the gospel; a zealous defender of the special and peculiar doctrines of it: whose ministry was blessed to many souls, for the conversion of some, and for the edification of others._ Dr. Gill speaks of him also, as _being personally and intimately known by him, and whose memory was precious to him and to many Christians now living._ This was written by Dr. Gill in 1751.

1721: Mr. John Skepp.

Mr. Skepp's name is found among the subscribing ministers at Salters'-hall Synod in 1719. He died soon after, in 1721. He wrote only one work, and this was not published till after his death. This was entitled, _Divine Energy; or the efficacious Operations of the Spirit of God upon the Soul of Man in his effectual calling and conversion, stated, proved, and vindicated. Wherein the real weakness and insufficiency of moral suasion, without the super-addition of the exceeding greatness of God's power, for faith and conversion to God, are fully evinced. Being an antidote against the Pelagian error._ In the dedication of this work to the church, Mr. Skepp says, _Your foundation, as to gospel order, was skilfully and successfully laid in the very beginning of the troublesome times, by the indefatigable pains and care of that eminent servant of and sufferer for Christ, Mr. Hansard Knollys; *

(* If Mr. Skepp meant to intimate that Mr. Knollys was of the sentiments propagated in the work on _Divine Energy, _ respecting the non-invitations of the gospel to the unconverted, nothing could have been more erroneous. Mr. Knollys was one of those ministers who, as Mr. Skepp expresses it, used an Arminian dialect in addressing the unconverted. This _wise master-builder_ thus exclaims, _O ye *unconverted* sinners, both professors and profane, will you accept of, and receive now a word in *season* of *spiritual* counsel? Then I will instruct you how you that are *miserable* may become *happy*, and you that are in a *damnable* state, may get into the state of salvation, before Christ come from heaven to judge the quick and the dead, and before you die._ He then instructs them to *consider* they were *dead* in trespasses and sins, and being without Christ, were without saving and sanctifying grace;—to *consider* their need of

Jesus Christ;—and to *consider* that God offered Jesus Christ to poor, lost, miserable sinners, (Rev. 3:17, 18,) yea, to the chief of sinners, (1 Tim. 1:12–15,) upon gospel terms of free grace, (Isa. 4:1–7,) without exception of persons, and without respect of price, (Rev. 22:7.) Be but *willing* to receive Christ, and the work is done._ He adds, _Open your hearts to Christ when he knocks at the door of your souls, and calls you to come to him, to receive him, and let him come into your hearts by his Holy Spirit and sanctifying grace, Rev. 3:20._ _Not that you can do *those things* of yourselves I have told you; without Christ you can do nothing, John xv. 8. But it is your duty to do them; and it is the free grace of God, to work in you to will and to do, according to his good pleasure, (Phil. 2:12, 13,) that he so working in you, you may work out your own salvation with fear and trembling._

See a work entitled, *The World that now is, and the World that is to come; or the first and second coming of Jesus Christ.* By Hansard Knollys, a servant of Jesus Christ. Rev. 1:19. London, printed by Thos. Snowden, An. 1681._ 12mo. pp. 48.)

And your walls were beautified by the labours and success of that evangelic son of consolation, Mr. Robert Steed. These two were the chief master builders, by whose blessed ministry you were built, and continued upon the foundation of the prophets and apostles, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone._

Mr. Skepp says, respecting his reasons for undertaking this work, _That he had heard and read of much contempt thrown upon the doctrine and preaching of the Spirit's work, as if it was not necessary to make the gospel ministry effectual for illumination, conviction, and conversion, and for carrying on the work of faith with power._ He exclaims, _A sad day it is, when men, to make themselves popular, take upon them to hector, and to run down the Spirit's work in regeneration and conversion,_ &c.

This work was reprinted in 1751, when Dr. Gill wrote a preface to recommend it; and it has been again printed in 1815, by Mr. James Upton, the present worthy pastor of the Baptist church in Church-street, Blackfriars_-road.

Mr. Skepp had not the advantages of a liberal education but he acquired by laborious application, after he engaged in the public ministry, a considerable acquaintance with the languages in which the Scriptures were written. He particularly excelled in Hebrew, which he acquired under a Jewish teacher; from whose instructions also he obtained a considerable degree of Rabbinical learning. At Mr. Skepp's death Dr. Gill purchased most of his Hebrew and Rabbinical books; as he had been first urged by Mr. Skepp to apply himself closely to those oriental studies, in which he afterwards made so much proficiency.

1722 to 1730: Mr. Humphrey Barrow and Mr. John Brine.

Mr. Skepp was succeeded by Mr. Humphrey Barrow in the year 1722. He continued the pastor of the church till the year 1727, when he died. He attended the meetings of the Baptist Fund, and of the Society of Ministers at Blackwell's Coffeehouse, during that period. No other particulars concerning him are come to the knowledge of the writer.

It is probable a Mr. John Moreton was employed to supply the church after Mr. Barrow's death; but it is certain that he never was settled as their pastor. His name will be again introduced as pastor of the church in Glass-house-street, Swallow-street.

1730: Mr. John Brine.

The next pastor at Curriers'-hall, was Mr. John Brine. He was born of parents in low circumstances, at Kettering, about the year 1703. When very young he was employed in the staple manufactory of that town, so that he had but few advantages from education. He was baptized, and joined the church then under the care of Mr. Wallis, at an early age; having received his first religious impressions from the ministry of his intimate friend Me. John Gill, who was a member of Mr. Wallis's church, and who occasionally preached at Kettering, while residing at Higham-ferrars. Mr. Brine, even while compelled to labour for his daily subsistence, embraced every opportunity to cultivate his mind, and at an early age had acquired a respectable acquaintance with the learned languages, and with other branches of useful knowledge. He was called to the ministry by the church at Kettering; and after some time was invited to undertake the charge of the church at Coventry. While here, he was allowed four guineas by the Baptist Fund, to purchase books, in 1726; and the next year four pounds for the same purpose. He continued here till he removed to London; at the beginning of the year 1730. His situation in the metropolis was increasingly agreeable to him, as it afforded him the opportunity of associating with the companion of his youth, and his spiritual father, Dr. Gill. The religious views of these truly great men were perfectly congenial upon religious subjects; they were both Calvinists of the supralapsarian scheme, and believed the doctrine of the elect being *actually* justified from eternity; but they had no conception of any person's being authorised to consider himself in a state of salvation who had not really believed in the Lord Jesus Christ as his justifying righteousness. Though, in the opinion of the writer, the notion of justification, antecedent to a living faith upon the Son of God, is the root of all the Antinomian errors, yet he is far from believing that Mr. Brine or Dr. Gill, or those who think with them upon that subject, are Antinomians: this they fully prove by their zeal for the necessity of practical godliness, as the fruit of sanctification and the evidence of justification; and by their so strenuously contending that the law is a rule of life to believers.

1750 to 1758: Mr. John Brine.

Mr. Brine was of great weight in the denomination, and was a very pious and useful minister. After Dr. Gill relinquished his Wednesday-evening lecture in Great Eastcheap, it was carried on for several years by him; and he was one of the lecturers on the Lord's-day being at Devonshire-square. He was also a very considerable writer, whether the number of his publications or the ability displayed in them are considered. In 1732 he published *A Defence of the Doctrine of Eternal Justification*, from some exceptions made to it by Mr. Bragge. In 1734 a funeral sermon for Mrs. Margaret Busfield, entitled, *The Covenant of Grace opened.* In the same year a fifth of November sermon, preached at Devonshire-square lecture, entitled, *God the Defence and Glory of his Church.*

In 1735, a funeral sermon for Mr. Hugh Lloyd, entitled, _The Believer_s Triumph over Death._ The same year, a sermon _On the Ordination of Deacons._

In 1736, _A Discourse on the Prayer of Jabez; being the substance of several sermons preached at Cripplegate._ In 1737, _Remarks upon a pamphlet entitled, Some Doctrines in the Supralapsarian Scheme impartially examined by the Word of God._

In 1743, _The certain Efficacy of the Death of Christ asserted, in answer to Dr. Watt_s Work entitled, The Ruin and Recovery of Mankind._ In the same year, _The Christian Religion not destitute of Arguments sufficient to support it; in answer to a Pamphlet entitled, Christianity not founded upon Argument._ The same year, _The Modern Question concerning repentance and Faith examined with candour; a refutation of Arminian Principles._

In 1746, _A Vindication of some Truths of Natural and Revealed Religion; in answer to Mr. James Foster._

In 1747, A funeral sermon for Mrs. Anne Wildman, entitled, _The chief of Sinners saved through Christ._

In 1749, _A Sermon at the Monthly Exercise, April 20, entitled, _The Nature of true Holiness explained._

In 1750, _A Treatise on various subjects._ The same year, _A Sermon at the Ordination of Rev. John Byland, at Worcester, July 26, 1750 entitled, The solemn Charge of a minister considered._ The same year, _The Christian Duty and Divine Efficiency represented, preached at Cripplegate, Nov. 11, 1750._ Also, _Some Account of the choice Experience of Mrs. Anne Brine, as written by herself, and collected out of her letters._ The same year, _The Causes of Salvation and Vocation considered, preached at Crispin-street, December 22, 1751._

In 1752, _The True Sense of the Atonement for Sin, by the Death of Christ; an Answer to Mr. Taylor, of Norwich._

In 1753, _Motives to Love and Unity among Calvinists who differ in some points; an Answer to Mr. Alverly Jackson._

In 1754, _The proper Eternity of Divine Decrees, and of the Mediatorial Office of Christ, asserted and proved: a Sermon preached at the Monthly Exercise, September 12, 1754, from Prov. viii. 22, 23._ In the same year, _A Vindication of Divine Justice in the Infliction of Eternal Punishment for Sin; in answer to a pamphlet entitled, The Scripture Account of a Future State considered._

In 1755, _Job_s Epitaph explained; a Funeral Sermon for Mrs. Elizabeth Turner._ The same year, _Some Mistakes in a Book of Mr. Johnson_s, of Liverpool, entitled, The Faith of God_s Elect, &c. noted and rectified._ Also, _A Charge of publishing a palpable Falsity, exhibited against the Authors of the Monthly Review, on the subject of Eternal Punishment._

In 1756, _Diligence in Study recommended to Ministers; a sermon preached at the ordination of Mr. Rist, of Harlow, in Essex, December 15, 1756._ The same year, _A Sermon preached at Great Eastcheap, entitled, Doctrines of the Imputation of Sin to Christ, and the Imputation of Righteousness to his a People._

In 1757, _A Sermon preached at Great Eastcheap, April 15, 1757, entitled, The Gospel not absurd; nor contrary to justice, nor licentiousness._

In 1758, _Animadversions upon the Letters of Theron and Aspasio; in an Address to that ingenious Author._ The same year, _A Funeral Sermon preached at Hemel Hempstead,

for the Rev. Clendon Dawkes, December 15, entitled, The Knowledge of future Glory, the Support of the Saints in present Troubles._ Also, _The Imputation of Christ_s active Obedience to his People, and the Merit of it demonstrated; a Sermon at Great Eastcheap, December 27._

In 1760, _A Discourse at the monthly meeting in Goodman_s-fields, July 19, entitled, Grace proved to be at the Sovereign Disposal of God._ The same year, _A Sermon preached at Great Eastcheap, December 31, entitled, Christ the Object of God_s eternal Delight._

In 1761, _A Sermon entitled, The Opposition of Flesh and Spirit in Believers._ The same year, _A Sermon preached at the Monthly Exercise, Unicorn-yard, February 19, entitled, Ancient Prophecy proved to be Divine._

In 1762, _A Sermon entitled, _A Right to Eternal Glory through the meritorious Obedience of Christ, proved to be consistent with the absolute freedom and sovereignty of Divine Grace, as the origin of it._ The same year, _A Sermon preached at Kettering, May 23, entitled The Glory of the Gospel considered._

In 1764, _A Sermon preached at the Monthly Exercise, April 20, entitled, Sin reigns not, nor shall reign in the Saints._

In 1765, _The Baptists vindicated from some groundless Charges brought against them by Mr. Eltringham._

1765: Mr. John Brine.

Mr. Brine was a Christian of exemplary life and conversation, and cultivated the Christian tempers with assiduity, and was an ornament to the religion he professed. His amiable character procured him general respect; nor would he admit that the fears entertained by some of his friends were well founded, that his doctrinal sentiments would lead any to licentiousness, He had been twice married. His first wife was a daughter of the Rev. John Moore, a Baptist minister at Northampton, by whom he inherited Hutter_s Hebrew Bible, which by him was esteemed an invaluable treasure. This excellent woman, with whom he had enjoyed much conjugal happiness, died August 6, 1745. Her funeral sermon was preached and published by Dr. Gill. It is not said who his second wife was, but she survived her husband upwards of twenty years.

1765: Death of Mr. John Brine.

Mr. Brine resided for many years in Bridgewater Square, but during his last illness he took lodgings at Kingsland, where he died. Not long before his decease, he expressed the state of his mind by saying, _ I think I am of sinners the chief, of saints the least; I know that I am nothing, but by the grace of God I am what I am;_ which words he ordered should be inscribed on his tomb-stone. His death took place Feb. 21, 1765, in the sixty-third year of his age. He left positive orders that no funeral sermon should be preached for him; not withstanding he had preached so many for others. His request as to this particular, was partly by not entirely complied with. His very intimate friend Dr. Gill preached on the occasion to his own people from 1 Cor. 15:10. *_By the grace of God I am what I am._* In May following the doctor preached the same sermon at St. Alban_s, and afterwards published it. In a note appended to the Sermon, the Doctor says of Mr. Brine: I

am debarred from saying so much of him as otherwise I could do, we both being born in the same place, and myself being some years older than he, and from his being among the first fruits of my ministry. I might take notice of his natural and acquired abilities, his great understanding, clear light, and sound judgment in the doctrines of the gospel, and the great deep things of God; of his zeal, skill, and courage in vindicating important truths, published by him to the world, and by which *he being dead, yet speaketh*. In fine, I might observe to you that his walk and conversation in the world was honourable and ornamental to the profession which he made, and suitable to the character he sustained as a minister of Jesus Christ, all which endeared him to his friends: but I am forbid to say more._Mr. Brine was buried in Bunhill-fields, where, upon his tombstone may be seen the following inscription:—

Here lie interred, the remains of

The Rev. JOHN BRINE,

Who departed this life

Feb. 21st, 1765,

In the 63rd year of his age.

His ministerial abilities were very extraordinary,

And his zeal and faithfulness

In asserting and defending the great truths of religion

Equally conspicuous.

Not long before his decease,

He expressed his sentiments in the following words:

_I think I am of sinners the chief,—of saints the least:

I know I am nothing,

But by the grace of God, I am what I am._

Also

MARY BRINE,

Widow of the above JOHN BRINE,

Obiit 31 Jan. 1784. Aetat. 86 years.

1765: Character of Mr. John Brine.

Mr. Brine was in person short and thick, and he had rather a forbidding countenance, that was not calculated to possess strangers strongly in his favour; but his manners were very much those of a gentleman. He was a man of considerable attainments in learning, and he excelled in his knowledge of the learned languages. The high character given him by the upright Dr. Gill, is sufficient to lead all impartial persons to conclude that he was a holy man, and a faithful minister of Christ. The late Rev. John Ryland used to express his opinion of him by saying of Bunhill fields, _There lie the ashes of the three great Johns;—John Bunyan, John Gill, and John Brine._

The volume of his works entitled _A Treatise on Various Subjects,_ was reprinted in 1813, by the Rev. James Upton.

The church in Curriers_-hall, Cripplegate, was one of those which first united in the Baptist Fund in 1717. The Messengers, were Mr. James Watson, and Mr. James Kirby, with the pastor, Mr. John Skepp. This church subscribed L150 at the commencement; the annual collections were not much more than L20. In Mr. Brine_s time, they usually amounted to about L24. The church was reduced very small at the close of our period, being not more than thirty members. It continued its relation to the fund, till within a few years past. Those who remained, united with Mr. Franklin, who now preaches in Red Cross-street.

VOLUME III.

BOOK. II.

1660: Church at Pinners_-hall.

CHURCH AT PINNERS_-HALL

THIS meeting-house was situated in Pinners_-hall-court, and was considered as one of the most celebrated Places of worship among the Protestant Dissenters. It was an ancient building of a moderate size, and its roof of a very peculiar construction. There were two tiers of Galleries, one above the other, on three sides of the building, so that it would contain a very considerable number of people. On these accounts, as well as for its central situation, it was for upwards of a century, the resort of large congregations, not only on the Lord_s-day, but at the Tuesday morning lecture. This lecture was established during the reign of Charles II. and some of the most eminent Presbyterian and Independent ministers supplied it. At the expiration of the lease, in 1798, it was removed to Artillery Street, but is now carried on at New Broad Street; but the attendance is almost reduced to nothing, notwithstanding the respectability of the ministers by whom the sermons are preached.

The congregation which originally used Pinners_-hall, was of the Baptist denomination; one of the very few which admitted of mixed communion. It was formed at some period

before the restoration in 1662, and the size and manner of its being fitted up, with six galleries, seem clearly to indicate that the congregation was both large and opulent.

1668: Mr. Anthony Palmer.

We have no account of the ministers who supplied this congregation earlier than 1662. But it is well known, that many very eminent Baptist ministers had preached in London during thirty years before that period, and doubtless this was one of the places in which they laboured. One of the sermons printed in Mr. Bunyan's works was preached at Pinners'-hall.

The first person who preached here, that I have met with, was one of the ejected ministers, Anthony Palmer, M. A. He was violently ejected from his parish living at Bourton-on-the-Water, in Gloucestershire, by some of the neighbouring gentry. An account is given of Mr. Palmer in vol. ii. p. 164.

It is not said at what time he came to London, but it is probable he was driven from Bourton by the rage of persecution. I find that in June, 1667, he assisted at the ordination of the Rev. John Wilson of Hitchen, being accompanied from London by Mr. John James.

In the year 1672, I find the elders of the church at Bedford, mentioning Mr. Palmer in a letter they sent to a gentlewoman, Mrs. Mary Tilney, one of their members, who had removed to London, (see vol. ii. p. 37.) In this they speak of him as a minister of long continuance in the city, who, with others mentioned, had shewed forth their faith, their worship, or good conversation with the word.

Anthony Wood, the virulent Oxford writer, speaking of Mr. Palmer, says, he carried on the trade of conventicling to the last, and thereby obtained a comfortable subsistence from the brethren. At length, after having passed through much evil and good report, he departed in peace, Jan. 26, 1678, in the 60th year of his age, and was buried in the burial ground adjoining Old Bedlam, near Moorfields.

Mr. Palmer is said to have been a man of good ministerial abilities. Bigland, in his collections for the county of Gloucester, gives the following account of him: The high esteem in which his memory is held by his followers, compensates for the extreme severity with which the royalists have marked his character: It may be candid to determine from such opposite descriptions, that he was a man of strong parts, enterprising and undaunted in the prosecution of what he thought his duty; and it is but just to allow, that no part of his private life could justify any suspicion of his integrity. The works published by Mr. Palmer, are enumerated in a note, vol. ii. p. 166.

Since publishing the second volume, I have met with a volume of Mr. Palmer's works, entitled *The Gospel new-creature; wherein the work of the Spirit in awakening the soul to get pardon of sin and an interest in Jesus Christ, is plainly opened. Discovering the false refuges and vain hopes for heaven of ignorant and formal professors, and the way of being a new creature in Christ.* To which is annexed, a small treatise, entitled, *The Tempestuous Soul calmed by Jesus Christ. By way of comfort to Deserted Souls.* The third edition. By A. Palmer, *Preacher of the Gospel at Bourton-on-the-Water, Gloucestershire*, [printed] 1743.

The preface to the first of these works, is dated Bourton-on-the-Water, Jan. 23, 1657. In this he speaks of having published some years before, *The Tempestuous Soul calmed, &c.*

which had been extensively read. The fourth edition before me, printed at Cirencester, 1743, has an epistle dedicatory, addressed _To my dear father, brothers, and sisters, and others of my beloved kindred and friends, &c._ It is composed of the substance of several sermons from Matt. 14:23-27. As a specimen of the style and talents of the writer, I extract the introductory paragraph: _The words contain an entire work and miracle of the Lord Jesus Christ, so that we need not look for coherence; they are usually opened to set forth the presence of the Lord Jesus Christ, so that we need not look for coherence; they are usually opened to set forth the presence of the Lord Jesus with his church in all the tempests that come upon it; which (I conceive) may without wresting, be also used to discover the presence of Christ, calming a particular soul in all the tempests that befall it; at least by way of allegory it will hold; as Austin says, there is such a spiritual use to be made of every miracle of the Lord Christ_s. And in this sense I shall make use of them, and so unfold them into these six observations,–

1. When Jesus Christ draws in a soul to himself, he usually raiseth a tempest in the soul.
There arose a tempest, &c. –
2. The soul, when there is a tempest, it comes in a perishing condition to Jesus Christ,
Lord save us, we perish, &c. –
3. Jesus Christ seems for a time to take no notice of a soul in such a tempest and perishing condition, *He was asleep, &c. –*
4. True faith may be mixed with much weakness and fear, and yet may engage the heart of Christ to succour, *Why are ye fearful, O ye of little faith? –*
5. A word from Christ, can rebuke that tempest upon a soul, *He rebuked the winds, &c. –*
6. The soul that is thus calmed, is filled with the wonders of Christ_s power and love.
They marvelled saying, What manner of man is this, that the winds and the sea obey him? The volume consists of 293 octavo pages, and proves the author to have been a good divine, and a very awakening practical preacher.

1685: Mr. George Fownes.

George Fownes, succeeded Mr. Palmer at Pinners_-hall in 1678. He was the parish minister at High Wycombe for many years, but voluntarily quitted it before the Restoration. It is likely he removed to London, as he is stated to have preached a lecture in Lothbury. It does not appear that he was pastor at Pinners_-hall more than a short period, as he went to Bristol in 1679, to succeed Mr. Hardcastle. In addition to what is said of Mr. Fowned in vol. ii. p. 536, the following is an extract from the old church records of the church in Broadmead: _1685, on the 29th of November, our pastor Brother Fownes died in a Gloucester goal, having been kept there for two years and about nine months, a prisoner, unjustly and maliciously, for the testimony of Jesus and preaching the Gospel. He was a man of great learning, of a sound judgment, and able preacher, having great knowledge in divinity, law, and physic, &c; a bold patient sufferer for the Lord Jesus and the gospel he preached._

1716: Mr. Wavell, Dr. Hunt, and Dr. Foster.

The next minister of Pinners_-hall, was Richard Wavell, A. M. he was a very excellent intrepid minister. He told his people, at Pinners_-hall, at the time when the laws against

Dissenters were rigorously prosecuted at the close of the reign of Charles II. that _if they would venture their *purses*, he would venture his *person*_;_ which he did, preaching constantly three times on the Lord_s day, at different places, and was often taken. It is probable that Mr. Wavel was an independent. I find in the records of the church of Petty France, at the history of the commencement of that church under Messrs. William Collins, and Dr. Nehemiah Cox, the following entry: _Upon the 16th of the third month, 1675, sister Faith Moulton, who had formerly walked with Mr. Palmer, was received into this congregation, those with whom she formerly walked, giving testimony of her good conversation to the messengers, sent by the Church to enquire concerning that matter._ *

(* As this refers to a period three years before the date given of the death of Mr.

Palmer, I do not know how to understand the expression _who had formerly

walked with the church under_ his care.)

On a head-stone in Bunhill-fields, on the south side of the road, not far from the entrance, is this inscription: _This adjourn to the family vault of the late Rev. Richard Wavell._

Whether Mr. Wavell was an independent or not, it is certain his successor Mr. (afterwards Dr.) Jeremiah Hunt, was. The church was perhaps then considered as among the Independent churches; the reader may find interesting accounts of both those excellent ministers in Wilson_s History, vol. ii. p. 260, 270. The successor of Dr. Hunt, Dr. James Foster, was of the Baptist denomination, and on that account must have a place in the history of this church.*

(* During the reign of King William III. Sir Humphrey Edwin, while Lord Mayor of London, carried the regalia of the city to the meeting-house at Pinners_-hall. This trifling instance of unnecessary pomp, furnished a pretext in the next reign, for passing the *Occasional Conformity Bill*.)

1699: Mordecai Abbot, Esq.

Before, however, I proceed to the memoir of that popular though alas! erroneous minister, I shall introduce some accounts of several distinguished gentlemen who were baptized members of the church while under the care of Baptist pastors, and who continued members during the period of Mr. Wavell_s and Dr. Hunt_s ministry.

The first of these was that truly great man Mordecai Abbot, Esq. receiver general of his Majesty_s customs, a baptized member of this church. This _noted Baptist,_ as Crosby calls him, died in the prime of his days, on Feb. 29, 1699, aged forty-three. He was buried, says Noble, in the church of St. Luke_s Middlesex; *

(* This is a mistake, as he was interred in Bunhill-fields burying ground.)
his epitaph speaks thus highly of him:

_Here Abbot, Virtue_s great example lies,

The charitable, pious, just, and wise;

But how shall Fame, in this small tablet, paint

The husband, father, master, friend, and saint?

A soul on earth, so ripe for glory found,
So like to their_s who are with glory crown_d,
That _tis less strange such worth so soon should go
To Heaven, than that it stayed so long below.

Noble says, that a Portrait painted by Richardson, and engraved by White, was prefixed to his life, published in octavo 1700. He conjectures that Mordecai Abbot, Esq. deputy pay-master of the land-taxes in 1700, was his eldest son. *

(* *Biographical History of England, from the Revolution to the end of the reign of George I.* by the Rev. Mark Noble, F. A. S. vol. i. p. 160.)

The biographer of Mr. Joseph Stennett, speaks (see vol. ii. p. 489) of _the very great intimacy which he had with Mordecai Abbot, Esq. receiver-general of his Majesty_s customs, as very much enlarging his acquaintance with the higher classes of persons who visited Tunbridge Wells,_ &c. He then adds, speaking of Mr. Abbot,—_That great and good man, who passed with so much reputation through several considerable posts, and was so highly esteemed by King William, *continued in them all a strict Nonconformist*; and was so far from being ashamed to own those with whom in religious matters he agreed, that he took all opportunities, even before persons of superior rank, to give Mr. Stennett such marks of respect, as rendered him uneasy; till he was convinced Mr. Abbott did it designedly to manifest the regard he had for his character. His premature and sudden death, happening at a time when Mr. Stennett was in very ill-health, together with the loss of an eldest daughter, had nearly proved fatal to his own life._ An epitaph found in Mr. Stennett_s works, vol. iv. p. 240, shews the affectionate respect he had for him, and the high estimation in which he held his character: this has been printed, vol.ii. p. 490.

There is one trait in the character of this distinguished man, which entitles it to great commendation, because it shews the consistency of his conduct, and the force of his principles, in regard to a subject which at that period very much agitated the public mind; namely, what was called _occasional conformity._ Many of the rich Dissenters, rather than not share in the honours of the state, which they had so essentially contributed to preserve from Popery and tyranny, were in the habit of having occasional communion at the Lord_s Table with the church of England. It is well known that King William had endeavoured to procure the abolition of the _Test and Corporation Acts_ in order that all Protestants who took the Oath of Allegiance, might be eligible to posts of honour and distinction under his government; but the high-church party prevented the accomplishment of his wishes, insisting upon it that *the church was in danger* from such a proposed innovation. The consequence of this was that for the purpose of getting offices of trust and magistracy, the Dissenters were ensnared into a violation of their dissenting and Christian principles; till at length the inconsistency of their conduct exposed them to the malice and power of their enemies, who procured towards the end of the next reign, the Bill against _Occasional Nonconformity,_ &c.

But Mr. Abbott, though *he passed through several considerable posts under the government*; yet CONTINUED IN THEM ALL A STRICT NONCONFORMIST. He

imitated *Moses* in that particular rather than *Joseph*. *Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to swear by the life of Pharaoh!* He had not so learned Christ,–

–And make the symbols of atoning grace,

An office-key, the picklock of a place;

That infidels may prove their title good,

By an oath dipped in sacramental blood. –

Whoever chose to frequent the *qualifying office* at St. Martin's church, he would not. It is probable that the honourable conduct of Mr. Abbot was in conformity with that of the Baptists in general, some of whom between the years 1688 and 1708 were found filling posts of distinction in corporations and under the government.

The sentiment expressed, that the Baptists in general opposed the absurd and wicked practice of taking the Lord's Supper as a qualifying test for civil offices, rests upon the fact that Mr. Joseph Stennett, who was at that time their most eminent minister, and who may fairly be presumed to speak their sentiments, opposed most strongly such conduct. In his works, vol. iv. p. 339, there is a letter to Mr. J– B–, dated Cheapside, Nov. 27, 1710, on the subject *Of Occasional Conformity to the Church of England.* It thus commences: *Sir, according to your desire and my promise, I here send you some of the principal reasons, why I think the members of our congregation ought not to receive the Lord's Supper in the Church of England.* The reasons are:

1. *The great difference between the constitution of our churches, and that of the church of England.*
2. *That those who communicate with the church of England, are necessitated in so doing to comply with such ceremonies and modes, at the administration of the Lord's Supper, as are nowhere prescribed in the holy Scriptures to be used on that occasion.*
3. *The perversion of the ordinance of the Lord's Supper in the Church of England, by making it a civil test, is another thing that renders it unwarrantable for the members of our churches to communicate with them. For this is so great a prostitution of this ordinance to sinister ends, and so contrary to the original design of it, that many of the members of that church are themselves not a little ashamed of it, and look upon it as a profanation of the holy Supper.*

The reader is referred for the illustration of these and other reasons against the practice, to the letter itself; and we must now return to give some further particulars of the excellent man, Mr. Mordecai Abbot, whose exemplary conduct in protesting practically against such inconsistencies in the presbyterian Dissenters led to this digression.

The funeral Sermon for Mr. Abbott was preached at Pinners'-hall, by the Rev. John Piggott, his intimate friend, and is published in his volume of sermons, entitled, *A Funeral Sermon upon the sad occasion of the death of Mordecai Abbott, Esq.; preached March 17th, 1699–1700.* This was dedicated to *the mournful relict,* &c. In this Mr. Piggott says, speaking of Mr. Abbot, *He has run his Christian race, and received his*

unfading crown: he has pressed through an ill-natured world with an unspotted name; for envy itself could not stain his character._ It appeared that the deceased had attended the public worship there a month before, where now his death had collected the congregation. The text from which Mr. Piggott preached is, 1 Thess. 4:13, 14. The first paragraph of his sermon is expressive of the great worth and excellency of Mr. Abbot_s character.

_The melancholy air that sits on every countenance, and the sad solemnities that attend our meeting at this time, give sufficient intimation of what I am come about; I need not tell you that it is to preach a funeral sermon, and whose death has given me the sorrowful occasion; for the deceased gentleman_s worth was so well known, and the want of him is so much felt, that the COURT, the CITY, and the CHURCH of GOD are not a little sensible who it is that is ravished from them._

In concluding his discourse the eloquent preacher thus draws the character of his late lamented friend;_And is he dead? Well, but his name lives, and will be fresh and fragrant to posterity. And I cannot do justice to his memory, without taking notice of those graces and virtues that eminently shined in his conversation and conduct; *for the memory of the just shall be blessed, and the righteous shall be had in everlasting remembrance.*

_I am not now to give the character of one that dwelt in a shade, but of one whose public employs exposed him to continual view; so that I doubt not of a crowd of witnesses to attest the truth of what I shall say. I confess, to collect all that was excellent and imitable in the deceased gentleman, is too big a task for so unskillful a person as I am; who can but lay the dead colours of his character, and must leave the finishing strokes to more artful hands, to men of better judgment; of greater compass of thought, and exactness of style. I must own I am at a loss where to begin, and what part of his excellent character I shall insist upon; but I think his piety towards God may properly enough be spoken of in the first place.

_He began very early to be religious, devoted to heaven the flourishing bloom of his youth, the first and best of his time; he had well studied and digested the great articles of the Christian faith, and had right notions of the person and Mediatory work of Christ, which had a mighty influence upon his whole conversation: for though he lived in a crowd and hurry of business, yet he lost not his religion in the midst of it, but kept close to the private and public duties of divine worship.

_With what seriousness and diligence did he attend on sermons, and what pains did he take in the writing and repeating of them; which was the more extraordinary, because his public employs engaged him in writing, even to toil and fatigue.

_He was not a gentleman that affected singularity, or pretended to more purity than other Christians; but there was a native gracefulness that attended his acts of piety and devotion, which he managed without pomp or noise: this was an evidence of his great humility, a grace very conspicuous in him, as some of the poorest in this place cannot but

have observed, to whom he carried it as if they had been his equals; which added a mighty lustre to the rest of his virtues.

_His zeal for spreading the great truths of the gospel was strong and regular, bright and flaming; for notwithstanding his many necessary avocations, he would redeem time to advise and assist in the promotion of substantial godliness.

_His sincerity was very extraordinary and visible, for he appeared always with great freedom, simplicity, and plainness in conversation; he detested all reserves and disguises; it was too mean for him to appear in masquerade, though *a la mode*; integrity preserved him from the meanness of flattery, and he preserved his integrity amidst a thousand temptations.

_He was a true Nathaniel, who by the grace of God (abating the common frailties of human life) might be said to have *kept himself unspotted from the world*, for he acted like Joseph in the court of Pharaoh, only with this difference, that he had not learned to swear by his life.

_In his family he was very exemplary, gave great encouragement to the beginnings of piety, but deeply resented the negligence of servants or children that should absent themselves from family-worship.

_The company he most delighted in, was such where he might either do good or receive it; and indeed I may say, that (like the Master he served) *he went about doing good*: for as he sought out objects to exercise his charity upon, so he would thank his particular friends when they told him of any that were deserving of his alms, and would as cheerfully relieve them in the most generous and noble manner. He was never deaf to the complaints of the poor and miserable, nor blind to the marks of their poverty; neither did he shut his heart, his purse, or his door against them; he did not only wish them well, and give them soft language, but afforded them solid supplies. He was truly that liberal man whom Solomon speaks of, that deviseth liberal things: for as *he was created in Christ Jesus to good works, so he did abound in all the fruits of righteousness and charity, which are by Jesus Christ to the praise and glory of God the Father*. And though he was thus rich in good works, yet his charitable distributions were never attended with the sound of a trumpet, but dispersed to multitudes in the most silent and secret way. *He delivered the poor that cried, and the fatherless, and him that had none to help him; the blessing of him that was ready to perish came upon him, and he caused the widow_s hear to sing for joy*. Yet in all this he observed the rule of our Saviour as near as possible, *not letting his right hand know what his left hand did*.

_He gave very liberally, though very privately, to encourage the bringing up of a pious and learned ministry in Ireland; and understanding that such a design was forming in London, he offered most generously to encourage it: but before it could be accomplished,

cruel death fettered those hands that were always active in dispensing the most noble charities.

_And I think it no contemptible branch of his character, that he paid a deference and respect to all that were of the sacred order of the ministry, under what denomination soever they passed: though his ears were not servilely bored to any; for he did not look on them as lords of his faith, but helpers of his joy; yet, I say, he was not wanting to afford them the testimonies of his respect. He gave liberally to support several lectures; particularly he encouraged that which is carried on in this place; for he was a gentleman of universal charity to all that bore the image of Christ.

_He was very tender of the reputation of all men; and as he could not endure to hear the follies of men made a matter of diversion, so he always deeply resented the reproaches and calumnies that are too commonly the sauce of conversation, and looked upon a man's good name as too valuable to lie at the mercy of every jester: so that I may say he was as free from rash censures, as he was from deserving them.

_He was always ready to compose any difference betwixt contending parties, which he did with that dexterity and impartiality, that the man was suspected to have a very bad cause that declined his arbitration.

_As to his acquitting himself in his public employ, it was with that honour that few men in an age do; he was so little charmed with the glitter of wealth, and his mind was so imbued with the principles of the Christian religion, that he thought it below him to raise his estate by the mean practices of craft or violence, bribery or oppression.

_He feared God and honoured the kind, and did not meddle with those that are given to change: his loyalty to his present Majesty, William, the king of Great Britain and Ireland, and the remarkable services he has done, in contributing towards supporting the credit of the nation at a time when it run very low, are too well known to need reciting here.

_Should I speak of him as a husband, a parent, a master, or a friend, I may say without an hyperbole, he had few equals under heaven; for never did I see a more affectionate husband, tender father, pleasant and faithful friend. Yet all these things that I have mentioned, and a great many more I have not time to name, that are lovely and of good report, could not prevent his being seized with a mortal sickness: *For what man is he that liveth, and shall not see death? Shall he deliver his soul from the hand of the grave? Selah.*

_His illness was more violent and dangerous than was generally apprehended, till within a day or two before his death: he then being asked concerning his hopes of eternal life, declared, *They were fixed on the satisfaction and obedience of Christ, and that upon the righteousness of the Redeemer alone he rested for the pardon of his sins and everlasting*

happiness. But immediately after this he grew delirious, and so was rendered incapable of discoursing distinctly concerning divine things; yet even while he was thus indisposed, he desired me to pray with him, and told me that he heartily joined. Indeed a few hours before he died he lay a little composed, and we imagined that some revival would have ensued; so apt are we to flatter ourselves with the belief of that which is the matter of our earnest wishes. But alas! one hour sunk all expectation of life, and the next put a period to it.

Thus lived and died that admirable person whose decease has occasioned this discourse; and though he be dead, yet he speaketh, and his works praise him more in the gate, than I have done from the pulpit. Is he dead? he is not gone out of the world, but removed to a better part of it; he has only changed his place, his company, and work. Therefore you his sorrowful surviving half, and the rest of his mourning friends should not think on him as lost, but as set at liberty; not as decaying amongst the clods of the valley, but as shining on an illustrious throne. Stop your tears, for were he sensible of your grief, and capable of making a pause in the midst of his hallelujahs, he would say to you that survive, *Weep not for me, but weep for yourselves.* Therefore let us all think what improvement to make of this sudden and surprising providence.

1657 1718: Mr. Thomas Hollis.

MR. THOMAS HOLLIS, another eminent person, was a member of the church even before the pastorate of Mr. Palmer. He died Sept. 12, 1718, and had for more than sixty years belonged to the church in Pinners_-hall: consequently must have been one of those who had endured the fire of trying persecutions, and who had ventured his *purse* at the time Mr. Wavell was so bold in the cause of Christ.

Mr. (afterwards Dr.) Hunt preached and published his funeral sermon. The character he gives him in the preface is, he says, _exactly just, though it may by some be esteemed blameable for its shortness.____He had,_ says, Mr. Hunt, _an early turn for religion. His mother dying when he was about twelve years of age, he expressed an extraordinary and uncommon degree of sorrow; and his father, to allay and direct his grief, tells him, *worldly sorrow worketh death, but godly sorrow worketh repentance unto salvation, not to be repented of;* which, by the blessing of God, proved a happy occasion to give a right turn to his thoughts: and attending Mr. Fisher at Sheffield, he had the change to salvation, which the Apostle speaks of, under his ministry, according to his own apprehension.

_His temper and complexion were naturally warm; this, when he had received a serious and religious ply, occasioned an uncommon zeal for the honour of God, and the interest of Christ, and for these great and valuable purposes he early devoted part of his increase. He maintained ever in his mind a lively sense of the evil of sin, and arrived to a considerable share of Scripture knowledge. He walked in the ordinances of the Gospel, and in communion with this church above sixty years, near the period of time which is

allotted to man in this world. His faith was strong, steadily trusting in God, and relying on his promises. His patience was remarkable; though he was so unhappy as to be blind many years, I never heard him make the least complaint, the several years I had been acquainted with him. He trained up his children in the knowledge and practice of religion, and set before them an example of holiness, and in particular of public, private, and secret devotion, which, by his instructions, he recommended to them; and was so happy as to see his pious care successful. If he had given any offence, as sometimes it would happen through the warmth of his temper, he would not disdain to ask pardon, though of an inferior, conscious it was the command of the Lord. He delayed not doing good to his death; but during his life cast about how he might be serviceable to his relations; and in a particular manner to the ministers of Christ, wherein he greatly abounded. His charity was not confined to a party, though it might extend more to those who were of his own persuasion, being sincere, and thinking himself in the right. He denied himself, and lived frugal, that he might more extensively express his goodness. Various methods he took to be publicly useful; distributing books proper to encourage religion and virtue, promoting schools for instruction of the poor to read and write, and contributing to building of places of worship. He erected and founded two churches at Rotherham and Doncaster, and established schools at each place for teaching youth; communicating in his life to their maintenance, but bequeathing some encouragement after his decease. He freely contributed to the building of a place at Sheffield, and when that proved too little, he liberally imparted to the building of a larger; and purchasing the less, converted it into an almshouse, wherein sixteen poor persons dwell, to which he has left a small endowment. He was so happy, as to live many years in full assurance, formed on Scripture grounds, (for he used to say, faith and repentance were the work of a Christian every day.) and founded on the merits and intercession of Jesus Christ, of an endless state of rest and happiness. And though through great age he at last declined, the images and ideas which the Scripture furnished him with, were the last that were effaced in him. When he was in his dying agonies, which were stronger than usual, at those advanced years, he was asked, whether he desired to be with Christ? And he answered, with an uncommon strength of voice, *_Yes! Yes!_* Thus he *lived to Christ*, and we have no reason to doubt, *but death proves to him gain.*

1680 1730: Mr. Thomas Hollis, Jun.

It is but seldom a minister has to describe a character of such uncommon excellency. Mr. Hunt speaks of him as *_being most liberal to those of his own persuasion, being sincere, and thinking himself to be right._* Were then the benefactions he bestowed to promote the cause of religion, and education, and humanity, at Rotherham, and Doncaster, and Sheffield, given to the Baptists at those places? If this were the fact, we have never yet known it: or, if that were not the case, it is pleasant to be informed from so good an authority, that these, though liberal were inferior to many other works of charity among those of his own denomination. It is highly gratifying to perceive *_the work of faith, and patience of hope, and labour of love,_* abounding in this aged saint; and though afflicted for years with blindness, yet supported by his evangelical principles, under the burdens of old age, and the agonizing pains of death. Doubtless *_for him to live was Christ, and to die was gain._*

This worthy gentleman left two sons, Messrs. Thomas and John Hollis, who were also Baptists, and members of the church in Pinners_-hall. The name of Mr. Thomas Hollis is found among those of the friends of Mr. Benjamin Keach, to repel the slander that had been cast upon the character of that worthy minister by Mr. Russen in his work on infant-baptism.

MR. THOMAS HOLLIS, junior, was the eldest. He has been already introduced to the reader as the treasurer of the Baptist Fund. He joined the church about the year 1680, when not much more than twenty years of age, and at the time Mr. Wavell was the pastor. But notwithstanding the minister was an Independent, he was baptized on the profession of his _repentance towards God, and faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ,_ and continued an honourable member for nearly fifty years; he died January 31, 1730, in the seventy-second year of his age. _He was,_ says Crosby, _as noted for public works of charity as his father, and inherited not only his estate, but his graces also._

His memory will be perpetuated in New England so long as _Harvard College_ continues, as the professors of philosophy and mathematics are called the _Holissian Professors,_ out of respect to (as he is called by Crosby) this _worthy, pious, and generous gentleman._ The donations of Mr. Hollis to that college, exceeded those of any other of its benefactors. He founded two professorships in it, one for divinity, the other for mathematics, and natural and experimental philosophy, Out of the income or interest of his donations, he ordered fourscore pounds per annum of their [American] money, to each of his professors, and ten pounds each per annum to ten poor scholars, of reputable characters, designed for the work of the ministry, as a help to defray the charges of their education; and twenty pounds per annum to the college treasurer, for the time being, to reward him for his care and trouble in managing the donations which he sent them. Besides these, he gave them a curious apparatus for mathematical and philosophical experiments, and Hebrew and Greek types, to be used for printing; and at different times augmented their college library with very valuable books, either from himself, or procured by him from his friends.

Some opinion might be formed of the high estimation in which Mr. Hollis was held, from the following extract from his funeral sermon preached by his pastor the Rev. Dr. Hunt.

_When he was a young man he made a public profession of Christ, and joined himself to this society, of which he has been a member about fifty years. The sense he had of the obligation he was under to this, and of the advantages that arise from complying with it, made him ever press it upon others, and recommend it to their practice. He was careful to observe attentively his own conduct, and for that reason wrote memoirs in short hand for many years, which he afterwards committed to the flames. His love of the Scriptures soon

appeared. When business invited him abroad into France, and other places, at that time a young man, the New Testament was his constant companion. Public worship, and in this society to which he stood related, he steadily and constantly attended; and was seldom or rarely absent, nothing but sickness, or something very extraordinary, preventing him. His respect to ministers, for their works sake, was great and unusual. He was pleased with their conversation, and especially when it was instructive. He never allowed himself to speak more severely of any of the performances of preachers, than that he should not choose to sit constantly under such a ministry. He was very steady in family worship, and regular in the time of performing it, to which the smallness of his family did not a little contribute. He was, when in business, constant and regular, and so good a manager of his time, that he always redeemed a part of it for the improvement of his mind by reading. He was careful in the choice of his books, and would often say, that the little leisure he had made it necessary. Towards the close of his life he told me, that he had laid aside the reading of such books as required great attention, and contented himself with those which were wrote in a more easy, and practical manner, and were fitted to raise and excite devotion. How well he behaved to his relations, you, who are his relatives, are perfectly apprized; with what prudence and faithfulness he advised in any affairs of consequence; and with what tenderness and compassion he received the news of any distress, that in the course of providence, did arise to any of you. His public spiritedness was remarkable and uncommon. Distant and remote countries, as well as Britain, will miss him, and lament his death. The communities to which he stood related received instances of his distinguished bounty; and what makes this part of his character the more shining, is, that his goodness was not confined, or restrained to a party.

Two years before his death, feeling his strength to abate, he lived in a constant expectance of his dissolution. In his last illness, before his senses failed him, desirous only that his relations would do what might satisfy themselves, and not expressing any solicitude about the event, he discovered a calmness and serenity of mind, which was agreeable to all about him. When one of his relations put him in mind of the pleasure that he must have from a review of his well-spent life, though it was in the Scripture-scheme no foundation for a claim to merit, he expressed his satisfaction, and approved the distinction. And to the same relative, in his latest moments, he declared his affection to all his relations, the church in particular to which he stood related, and to all the churches of Christ. Thus died this good man: thus he dropped like a shock of corn fully ripe, in the seventy-second year of his age. This sermon is dedicated to _Mr. Nathaniel Hollis, Mr. John Hollis, brother, and Mr. Thomas Hollis, nephew._

But if his death was lamented in London, it was much more so in America. _No sooner,_ says Crosby, _did the death of this worthy pious gentleman, reach the distant churches in New England, but from the highest to the lowest they seemed affected with the sense of the greatness of their loss, by the death of this their most generous and noble patron of learning and religion._

The Rev. Benjamin Coleman, pastor of a church in Boston, his intimate friend and correspondent, preached a sermon on the occasion of the death of Mr. Hollis, before his Excellency the Governor and the General Court, April 1, 1731. The thanks of the council

were next day voted to Mr. Coleman, for his sermon _on occasion of the death of Thomas Hollis, Esq. of London, who has merited highly of this government and people, by his liberal benefactions to Harvard College, for the promoting of learning and religion in this province; and that they desire a copy of the said sermon for the press._

In this vote the House of Representatives concurred, April 2, 1730, and also the Governor, Jonathan Belcher, Esq. The sermon was accordingly published with the title of _The Friend of Christ and his People,_ and dedicated, _To his Excellency Jonathan Belcher, Esq. Captain General, and Governor-in-Chief, in and over his Majesty_s province of the Massachuset_s-bay in New England, and to the honourable, his Majesty_s Council, and House of Representatives, in General Court assembled._

The stile of this dedication is laboured eulogy, but yet it appears to breathe the generous emotions of a grateful heart. The following is an extract: _

_Know then, that our friend Hollis sleepeth! the virtuous, the pious, the gracious, the generous and munificent friend to our college and the churches of New England! The friend whom Christ inspired, and raised up for us, to do great things for his name and glory; having enriched him to all bountifulness us-ward, to cause through us, thanksgiving to God, not only now, but in all times to come. For, how great are the foundations which it has pleased God, from the enlarged heart, and open hand of this his servant, to lay, for the service of religion and learning in future generations, so long as it shall please the Lord Christ to have his golden candlesticks in these regions of the earth, and to walk in the midst of them! To how many thousands of our money doth the charity and bounty of our excellent friend amount; which of his own mere motion, and even against the restraints of his humble friend now speaking, he freely poured in upon us, from time to time, as a living spring whose waters fail not!

_Again, that which is singular in the piety and benefits of Mr. Hollis unto these churches was, that though he was not strictly of our way, nor in judgment with us in the point of infant baptism, yet his heart and hand were the same to us, as if we had been one in opinion and practice with him. And in this let him stand a teaching pattern and example to us, of a noble Christian, catholic, apostolic spirit and love; which makes those that differ in lesser matters to receive one another to the glory of God, and a shining testimony against a narrow party spirit, which is so much the disgrace and detriment of the protestant interest; and which so early began among the disciples of Jesus, and was rebuked by him, even in John himself, that apostle of love and charity afterward, who once said to Christ in a fret of zeal, *Master, we saw one casting out devils in thy name, and he followeth not us, and we forbad him, because he followeth not us.* But, *Jesus said, forbid him not.*

_To the honour of my country, I must add, that it was the account Mr. Hollis received from us, of the free and catholic air we breathe at our Cambridge, where protestants of

every denomination may have their children educated, and graduated in our college, if they behave with sobriety and virtue, which took his generous heart, and fixed it on us, and enlarged it to us. And this shall be with me, among his distinguishing praises, while we rise up and bless his memory, i.e. bless God in remembrance of all the undeserved favours done us by him.

__And it were an ungrateful part indeed in us, after so many great benefactions from him, to the interest of learning and religion among us, by the will of God to all posterity, if his death were no mentioned among us, in that solemn and mournful manner as it now is. The weeping widows of Joppa, would else rise up in judgment against us, and condemn us, for they stood mourning about the dead body of Dorcas, a pious disciple, that was full of good works and alms-deeds which she did; and the risen Jesus approved their sorrow, and at the apostle_s prayer raised her from the dead; but we mourn a greater than Dorcas, and have more to shew for our sorrow, than her coats and garments for the poor. Our Hollis has left behind him wardrobes of rich clothing, in many places, both for the souls and bodies of the poor, and some of our sons wear them, in our sight, and others are to put them on, from generation to generation; and if their fathers have dry eyes, we call on our children, and indeed on all the sons of the prophets among us, to weep over Hollis, who clothes you in better than scarlet, with the best of delights, intellectual and moral, and has put on you ornaments of apparel richer than gold! Lament over him therefore with this lamentation: _How is our beauty fallen! How lovely and pleasant to us was he in his life! His love to us was wonderful; and all for Jesus sake.__

Another sermon was published by the Rev. Edward Wigglesworth, D. D. Hollissian Professor in Divinity, preached in the hall of Harvard College, which enumerates the same facts respecting the munificence of their departed benefactor. The following is an extract: _

__The expressions of his bounty were not confined to a party. And indeed, by his frequent and ample benefactions, for the encouragement of theological as well as human knowledge among us, who are Christians of a different denomination from himself, he hath set such an example of a generous, catholic, and Christian spirit, as hath never before fallen within my observation, nor, so far as I now remember, within my reading. However, it was nothing but what appeared in the constant tenor of his letters, that he did not apprehend *the kingdom of God to consist in meat and drink, but in righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost*. I hope the shining example he hath set herein, will be an irresistible inducement to those that shall have the government of this society in all times to come, religiously to comply with the very modest reservations he hath made in favour of those of his own denomination among us.__

A philosophical discourse by Mr. Isaac Greenwood, M.A. the Hollissian Professor of Philosophy and the Mathematics, was read to the Students in the College, April 7, 1731, in which he extolled the virtues of their deceased founder in turgid and glowing language.

The president of the college, Mr. Benjamin Wadsworth, also prefixed a dedication to the sermon of Dr. Wigglesworth, in which, for the purpose of introducing the splendid gifts of Mr. Thomas Hollis, which he enumerates, he gives the following affecting statement of the origin of Harvard College.

_The using of proper means to promote and propagate right knowledge, must needs be looked on as very beneficial to mankind. Our fathers, who first settled in this wilderness, were well aware of this, and therefore in their early times, though they were few in number, poor, and low in their worldly circumstances, conflicting with many dangers and difficulties, did found a college here, called Harvard College, in Cambridge in New England, to train up youth in good knowledge, learning, and virtue, that thereby they might be the better qualified, eminently to promote the glory of God, and good of men. That God of all grace, and giver of every good gift, who enabled and inclined our fathers to engage in this noble work, has owned and smiled on their pious designs in this matter. He has hitherto continued the college, and made it a *river, the streams whereof make glad the city of God*. That many educated here have been eminently serviceable in promoting both the spiritual and temporal welfare of this people, as well as in some other countries, is too well known to need any proof.

To the college thus begun in weak and low circumstances, God, of his mere grace, has raised up sundry kind, generous benefactors, some at one time, and some at another; some in doing less, and some more, to promote the noble and pious ends aimed at in founding of it; thanks be to God for his smiles herein. But the late Thomas Hollis, Esq. of London, merchant, now gone to his everlasting rest, did in his donations to our college, far exceed any other of its benefactors.

It is impossible to read the extracts from these American publications, without noticing how much the ministers appear to be astonished that such princely liberality and noble benevolence should have been manifested towards them by a person of another denomination of Christians; and that person too a Baptist. It was not a century before this when their forefathers imprisoned, fined, punished, and even banished several Christians, for the crime of asserting that infant baptism had neither precept nor precedent for it in the New Testament, and for presuming to baptize those who, the General Court said, had been before baptized! It is probable at that time some might have been living whose fathers had seen good Roger Williams in the depth of a hard winter driven out of the colony, going he knew not whither, nor did they care; when he found that hospitality and friendship among uncivilized Indians, which had been refused him by his countrymen and brethren. It is gratifying to know that the spirit and conduct of Thomas Hollis should have so effectually taught these Massachuset Independents what their forefathers, Messrs. Cotton, &c. might have learned from the founder of Rhode Island Colony, the persecuted Roger Williams, viz. that those who best understand the right of private judgment in religion, will be the most liberal in granting the free exercise of it in others who differ from them. America owes her independence as a nation, and the unrestrained liberty of conscience which her citizens enjoy, to the principles taught by Roger Williams, and the example set them by Thomas Hollis, (both English Baptists,) in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

1680 1730: Mr. John Hollis.

Another distinguished person was MR. JOHN HOLLIS, brother to the aforesaid Mr. Thomas Hollis. Crosby says, _He possessed the virtues and graces of his family; and if his public charitable benefactions did not amount in sum, he having a large family to provide for, yet they did in degree, as coming from a soul as truly great and noble as theirs. Three such instances in one and the same family are rare to be found. All truly pious, early converts, and such as *honoured the Lord with their substance.*_

1682 1736: Mr. John Hollis.

It is not said when he joined the church in Pinners_-hall, nor by whom he was baptized. He is mentioned by Crosby as uniting with his brother in making the public baptistry in Barbican in 1715; and as one of _those gentlemen of the Baptist persuasion who were famous for their piety towards God, and their zeal for the interest of religion in the world._

Mr. Hollis died Jan. 4, 1735_6, and his funeral sermon was also preached by Dr. Hunt, from 1 Pet. 1:24, 25. From this we learn that _the principles of religion, which in his youth were instilled into his mind, soon made a deep impression upon him, and became the incorruptible seed of a spiritual life. His great concern was to keep alive those religious and divine affections. And for that purpose, when business called him to leave the city, and go into the country, he took with him such books as were written with peculiar warmth, and particularly fitted to excite and raise devotion. He was steady and constant in private as well as public worship, and paid ever a due deference to appointments of the Christian doctrine, and recommended them to the observance of others. His beneficence was considerable, and in many instances private, though in public ones it could not be concealed. He had his passions under great regulation, and though he did not talk much, he was pleased with the free and cheerful conversation of others, even to the last. He was careful and exact in the performance of relative duties; a good husband, and a most affectionate father, always giving his children a handsome liberty of conversing with freedom before him, and at the same time ever concerned about their spiritual and eternal welfare. Not to say any thing of the kind usage he expressed to his menial servants, I could enlarge greatly on this part of his character, were it not that I fear I should raise in his nearest relatives an immoderate grief, which it is their duty to suppress. His patience under his pain was remarkable; and if he had any desire to live longer, it was, that he might be useful to his family and others._

Mr. John Hollis was a draper. He was a manager of the Baptist Fund as early as the year 1724; was also one of the treasurers, and a liberal benefactor, leaving at his death £1100, the interest to be distributed to the poor of several Baptist churches.

There is a sermon also of Dr. Hunt for Mrs. Hannah Hollis, who died Dec. 20, 1724. This is founded upon Ps. 53:13, 14. *Like as a father pitieth his children, &c.*

Mr. John Hollis lost an excellent son, named Samuel, at the age of 24, May 24, 1724. Dr. Hunt published a funeral sermon for him, founded upon Eccles. 12:1_6. *Remember now thy Creator, &c.* _This lovely youth,_ says Dr. H. _in the dawn of his days, by a sudden and unexpected stroke, is immaturally snatched away: but I must correct myself; he was ripened for the world of spirits._

1682 1736: Dr. James Foster.

Having given these memorials of pious worth, which existed among the members of this church whilst it was under the care of evangelical ministers, the writer proceeds to give some farther account of Dr. James Foster.

It was not till after this gentleman had been several years in the ministry, that he embraced the opinions of the Baptists. This change took place while he was a minister at Trowbridge, and in consequence of reading Dr. Gale_s reply to Dr. Wall: he was probably baptized by Mr. Joseph Burroughs, of Paul_s-alley, Barbican, with whom he afterwards became co-pastor. He was ordained to that office July 1, 1724.

1724: Dr. James Foster.

Unhappily for Mr. Foster, and the congregation in Barbican, he had been educated by Mr. Hallet, senior, of Bristol, and was confirmed by the Rev. James Pierce, of Exeter, in the principles of Socinianism. These had been first introduced among the Baptists in London, by the learned Dr. John Gale, who defended the non-subscribing ministers at the Salters_-hall Conference in 1719. *

(* Mr. Wilson, in his account of Mr. Foster, when speaking of the proof of his *integrity* and *disinterestedness* in becoming a Baptist, says, _he could entertain but a little expectation of meeting with a Baptist church from which his want of orthodoxy would not have excluded him._ I suppose there was no congregation at that time among the *Calvinistic Baptists* which would have suffered him to occupy the pulpit the second time: but in Paul_s-alley Dr. John Gale _had laboured,_ and Dr. James Foster _entered into his labours:_ here were a people who, by their false notions of candour and catholicism, were _made ready to his hands,___a people prepared_ for Socinianism.)

The settlement of Mr. Foster at Barbican, and when, twenty years afterwards, he was engaged in the Lord_s-day evening lecture at the Old Jewry meeting in the year 1728, afforded him but too great opportunities of propagating the sceptical and unscriptural notions he had imbibed.

Mr. Foster, previously to his joining the Baptists, had published a work entitled, _An Essay on Fundamentals, with a particular regard to the Doctrine of the ever blessed Trinity._ This was while he supplied the two congregations at Colesford and Wokey, near Wells; from both which he only received an annual income of fifteen pounds. Subjoined to his Essay on the Trinity is a sermon, entitled, _The Resurrection of Christ proved, and

vindicated against the most important Objections of the ancient Jews or modern Deists, and his Disciples shewn to be Witnesses of the Fact._

1724: Dr. James Foster.

In the year 1744 Mr. Foster published his works, in four volumes. These contained a variety of subjects, explained according to the Socinian scheme of divinity. In reply to these, that nervous polemical writer, the Rev. John Brine, published, in 1746, an octavo volume of four hundred and six pages, entitled, *_A Vindication of some Truths of Natural and Revealed Religion, in answer to the false Reasonings of Mr. James Foster on various subjects, &c._*

Mr. Foster had asserted, *_As we cannot in reason, so we are not obliged by revelation, to carry our faith one jot beyond our understanding._* I dare venture to assert, says Mr. Brine, *_that if Mr. Foster will not allow that some things must be believed to be true, the nature of which he cannot explain, he will be driven into direct atheism, that he will unavoidably be compelled to renounce, not only revealed, but natural religion also, and be obliged to embrace the most palpable absurdities. Tis not in the least degree dishonourable to our reason to assert, that there are truths, which demand our most religious regard, whose nature far exceeds our comprehension. It cannot be so, if it is rational to believe the existence of a Being who is infinitely above us. Which at present, I suppose, I may take for granted. But how long this will be allowed by some men, I shall not pretend to say._* Mr. Brine argues that *_the distinction of things above and contrary to reason is just and true. We profess, says he, and indeed we do believe things which are above our reason, but we cannot possibly discover that they are in the least contrary to our reason; and therefore we are almost tempted to imagine, that those rational gentlemen, who pronounce our opinions absurd, do not so much exceed us in good sense, as in prejudice, pride, and arrogance._*

Mr. Foster never answered, nor even attempted, so far as appears, any reply to Mr. Brine.

In the year 1728, a Wednesday evening lecture was opened for Dr. Foster to supply, and he continued it till nearly the time of his death, when Mr. Charles Bulkeley was chosen to succeed him.

1748: Dr. James Foster.

In December 1748, Mr. Foster received from the Marischal College of Aberdeen, the degree of Doctor of Divinity. If this were intended as a mark of distinction for the learning and talents of Mr. Foster, it was well bestowed; but surely Principal Blackwell, and Professor David Fordyce who it is said sent him very handsome letters with his diploma, could not have designed to compliment him for his ability as a *teacher* of divinity.

There is one good anecdote of Mr. Foster which I with pleasure record. A gentleman, who afterwards took orders in the Church of England, one day called upon him to

converse with him upon scepticisms which then oppressed his mind. After the necessary introduction, he began to state his objections, when the Doctor with great gravity, stopped him with this question: _Have you asked the solution of your difficulties from God this morning? Have you prayed to the fountain of all light for instruction?_ Upon receiving an answer in the negative, he rejoined, _Sir, you will excuse my gratifying your curiosity upon the subject of revelation, while you are chargeable with the breach of one of the first duties of natural religion._

Among those whom Mr. Foster baptized, was one person of distinguished and eccentric character, Mr. Matthew Whiston, who became a member of the church under his care.

Mr. Foster was charged with deism and infidelity: this he repelled by saying, _I take this opportunity to declare in an age in which scepticism prevails to an high degree, that I esteem it an honour to be a firm believer; and, from devotedness of mind, a teacher and public advocate for the Christian institution, and think all those justly chargeable with great baseness, pusillanimity, and hypocrisy, who either preach, or profess it, for the sake of popularity, or any worldly consideration whatsoever, without being themselves real and hearty Christians._

Without suspecting Mr. Foster's integrity, or charging him with not believing what he preached to be true, we may yet question whether he was a _firm believer_ in the doctrines of *revealed religion*: or _a real and hearty Christian_, if that term necessarily imports a follower or imitator of the Lord Jesus Christ. Can that man be a genuine disciple of Christ who rejects the doctrine of the death of Christ as a real sacrifice for sin, and who denies the influences of the Holy Spirit in regeneration and sanctification? Mr. Foster exalted human reason to the supreme rank, making her the sole umpire in religion; and therefore he rejected all those doctrines of divine revelation which could not have been discovered even by the reason of Adam before his transgression, much less by that of his depraved descendants. There is certainly good reason to conclude, from several circumstances in the life of this gentleman, that he was an *honest dissenter*, and an *upright man* in avowing his sentiments; but then those sentiments were subversive of the gospel of Christ: and therefore Mr. Foster, with all his _charity_, and his _correct deportment in civil, social, and religious life_, was not such a Christian as the apostle John would have received into his house, bidding him *God speed*. 2 John 10.

1753: Dr. James Foster.

Mr. Foster died Nov. 5, 1753, and was interred in Bunhill-fields. Funeral sermons were preached on account of his death by Dr. Caleb Fleming, at Pinners_-hall, from Acts 11:23, 24; and by Mr. Charles Bulkley, at the lecture in the Old Jewry, on John 5:35.

A handsome monument was erected over his tomb, which has been suffered to go to decay. The following is the inscription: _

Here lie the remains of

JAMES FOSTER, D.D.

Born at Exeter, in Devonshire, 16th of September, 1697.

Early trained up to academical studies,

And prepared to the sacred work, to which

He devoted himself

By diligent researches into the holy Scriptures,

And the assistance they afford as a guide to

Natural reason:

As also by serious piety, elevated thought,

Happy facility in composing, and fluency of

Expressions;

His judgment in divine things not guided by

The opinion of others

Produced many discourses and writings out of the common way,

Some in defence of the divine religion,

But most in recommending love towards God

And men.

Notwithstanding the censures which fell upon him,

He was candid towards all whom he believed sincere,

Beneficent to the neglect of himself,

Agreeable and useful in conversation,

And careful to avoid even the appearance of evil.

He began his ministry in the west country
Under great discouragements,
Was ordained pastor in July, 1721, at
Barbican, in London,
And after twenty years service there,
Removed to Pinners_-hall, in the same city.
In December, 1748, the University of Aberdeen, in Scotland,
Conferred on him, unsought, the degree of D.D.
His eloquence procured him many hearers of different persuasions,
Till at length, by his great assiduity in preaching and writing, *
He sunk into a nervous disorder,
Which, increasing upon him for two or three years
Put an end to his life, 5th of November, 1753,
In the 57th year of his age._

(* Besides the Works already mentioned, he published the following: The Usefulness, Truth and Excellency of the Christian Revelation, defended against the Objections in a late Book, entitled, _Christianity as old as the Creation,_ 1731. A volume of Sermons on interesting subjects, 1734. This was reprinted with three additional volumes, in 1744. Three pamphlets on the subject of Heresy: a Controversy with Dr. Henry Stebbing, one of the King_s Chaplains, and Preacher to the Society in Gray_s Inn, 1735, 1736, 1737. An Account of the Behavior of the late Earl of Kilmarnock, after the sentence, and on the day of his execution, 1746. Discourses on all the principal Branches of Natural Religion and Social Virtue, 1749: a second volume in 1752.)

1779: Dr. Caleb Fleming.

DR. CALEB FLEMING succeeded Dr. Foster at Pinners_-hall; and at his death, in 1779, the congregation, which had existed probably a hundred and fifty years, became extinct. Little could the excellent Andrew Palmer, and George Fownes, have thought that they would be ultimately succeeded by such persons as Dr. Foster and Dr. Fleming; but had they foreseen it, they would doubtless have predicted that destruction of the congregation

which took place; and which, on account of the errors it had received, they would not have lamented.

VOLUME III.

BOOK. II.

1676: Sabbatarian Church at Pinners hall.

Sabbatarian Baptist Church, Pinners_-hall.

THIS was the church founded by the laborious and learned Rev. Francis Bampfield, M.A. He had been ejected from Sherborne for his nonconformity. A large account is given of him in vol. ii. p. 476. He died a martyr to his principles in Newgate, Feb. 16, 1684, just before Mr. Ralphson, and Mr. Thomas Delaune, the famous nonconformist writer. The deaths of the two former of these were improved in a sermon by Mr. Hercules Collins, published in London, 1684, entitled, *_Counsel for the Living, occasioned by the Dead; or a Discourse on Job 3:17, 18, arising from the Deaths of Mr. Francis Bampfields, and Mr. Zachariah Ralphson. By Hercules Collins, their fellow-prisoner in Newgate, _* The following texts are on the title page: _

The Lord looseth the prisoners, Ps.46:7. Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints, Ps.116:15. And hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel, whereunto I am appointed a preacher and an apostle, and a teacher of the Gentiles, for the which cause I also suffer these things: nevertheless I am not ashamed, for I know whom I have believed, 2 Tim.1:10, 11.

1713: Mr. Joseph Stennett.

MR. EDWARD STENNETT succeeded after the church was again collected in 1684; and though he continued to reside at Wallingford, he yet supplied them occasionally until his son JOSEPH (one of the brightest ornaments of society which our denomination has produced) was settled over them as their pastor, March 4, 1690. At his ordination a day of fasting and prayer was observed: Mr. John Belcher, sen. Mr. Hansard Knollys, and Mr. Isaac Lamb, were engaged in this solemn service. Mr. Belcher and Mr. Knollys delivered appropriate exhortations, and Mr. Lamb preached on Matthew 9:38; *_Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, &c.* It is added, *_The former assented and consented thereto, and the latter pronounced the words of ordination. They all spent some time in prayer, and proceeded to ordination with imposition of hands. **

(* At this time Mr. Joseph Stennett did not belong to the Calvinistic or Particular Baptists, neither did he connect himself with the Arminian or General Baptists; but belonged to those Baptist churches which were founded upon the six principles mentioned in Heb 6:1, 2. There were several of the pastors in London at that period, who would not be designated in any other way than as such who _professed and practised the six principles of the Christian religion._ This distinction will account for many mistakes which have been made by the author

of the History of the General Baptists, respecting persons whom he has tenaciously claimed as having belonged to that denomination.)

Mr. Stennett continued with this church till his death, in 1713. At one part of the time he was an assistant on the Lord's day to Mr. Richard Allen, in Barbican, which will be noticed in its appropriate place. A large account of this eminent minister has been given in the two former volumes.

In the year 1713 a third edition of the hymns of this worthy minister, _in commemoration of the Lord's Supper, _was published. This was recommended by the following London ministers;_Messrs. Joseph Maisters, Benjamin Stinton, Richard Allen, John Piggott, Nathaniel Hodges, and Ebenezer Wilson.

In the time of Mr. Joseph Stennett, another Sabbatarian church, which had been under the care of Mr. John Belcher, a Sabbatarian Baptist, and Mr. Henry Cook, who succeeded him, united with the church at Pinners_-hall. Mr. Belcher died March 1695, and his funeral sermon was preached by Mr. Stennett.

1689: Lord s-day Morning Lecture at Pinners_-hall.

The Sabbatarian church at this place, after the death of Mr. Stennett, in 1713, was without a minister until 1727; and during this long interval they were supplied by Baptist ministers. Mr. Edmund Townsend was chosen pastor, and ordained on the third of December, 1727; or, as the records express it, _the church gave themselves up to Mr. Edmund Townsend._ He was a worthy and respectable man; and though not particularly distinguished for literary attainment, was yet a useful minister, and greatly esteemed in his day. He died, Jan. 5, 1763, having been for some time before rendered incapable of preaching. His remains were interred in the burial-ground behind the Baptist meeting-house in Mill-yard, where he had buried his wife a few years before. She appears to have died in the year 1755, in the sixty-eighth year of her age: but the inscription on the stone is scarcely legible. It is not known whether this Mr. Townsend was descended from a Mr. John Townsend, a minister in London among the particular Baptists, the father of Mr. Meredith Townsend, who changed his sentiments, and became a minister of the Independent denomination.

The church continued at Pinners_-hall till 1727, when they removed to Curriers_-hall; and in 1799 they removed for a few years to Red-cross-street, and now meet at Devonshire-square meeting, under the pastorate of the learned Rev. Richard Burnside. The church is reduced to about six members, and the congregation is not much more numerous.

Lord_s-day Morning Lecture at Pinners_-hall.

The earliest account I have seen of this lecture relates to 1689. On July 7, in that year when Mr. Thomas Harrison was called to succeed Dr. Nehemiah Coxe at Petty France, it is said he informed Mr. William Collins, the pastor, and Mr. Collet, one of the deacons, that _he was willing to serve the congregation, if they would allow him to keep up his lecture at Pinners_-hall, which was consented to by the congregation._

1753: General Baptist Church at Pinners_-hall.

Mr. Elias Keach preached _four sermons on justification._ At the morning lecture at Pinners_-hall, where it is supposed he had often fifteen hundred hearers. As it is said Mr. Keach often preached here between the years 1693 and 1701, it is probable the lecture was supplied by different Baptist ministers.

I find that Mr. John Weatherly, mentioned page 344, preached at Pinners_-hall on one part of the Lord_s day. At his death May 31, 1752, Mr. Joseph Burroughs preached his funeral sermon, founded upon 1 Cor. 15:57.

He was succeeded at Pinners_-hall by Mr. Richard Barron, who was ordained to the pastoral office March 22, 1753. Mr. Joseph Burroughs preached on the occasion, and published his discourse, entitled, _The duty and reward of a faithful Pastor; founded upon 1 Pet. 5:1_4._ He was pastor of a church at Deptford in 1749.

Dr. Joseph Jeffries was a minister also of the General Baptist church in Pinners_-hall. He has been mentioned page 344.

Before we take our leave of this place, we shall introduce a remark of Judge Blackstone, (Comment. Vol. iv. p.54,) in relation to an incident alluded to in a note, page 377 of this work. _Sir Humphrey Edwin, a Lord Mayor of London, had the imprudence, soon after the Toleration Act, to go to a Presbyterian meeting-house in his formalities; which is alluded to by Dean Swift, in his _Tale of a Tub,_ under the allegory of Jack getting on a great horse, and eating custard._ This celebrated commentator on the laws of England forgot to mention that the episcopalians soon after, by procuring the Occasional Conformity Bill, made the Presbyterians pay very dearly for one of their body having taken a liking to custard!

VOLUME III.

BOOK. II.

1688: Church in Goat-street, Southwark.

CHURCH AT GOAT STREET, HORSELYDOWN, SOUTHWARK.

THE meeting-house in which Mr. Benjamin Keach preached, was situated in Goat-street, near St. John_s church. It was a wooden building, and stood at the north-west corner of Goat-yard-passage, now called Goat-street. The front door came into a short cross street from Horselydown Back-street, to Free-school-street. The meeting-house was enclosed by a brick wall in front, with a court-yard, and lime trees on each side of the path leading to the principal door. It is a still and quiet part of Southward, very few carriages passing that way. *

(* My friend Mr. Benjamin Coxhead, sen, a member of the church in Carter-lane, from whom I had the above information, says, _ I am one of the few that are living who remember the meeting-house. I have been in it several times when it was used a cooperage. Part of the ground on which the meeting-house stood is now occupied by Mr. Heighton, as a blacksmith_s shop, and I believe a part of the old building is still standing._)

1697: Mr. Benjamin Keach.

It appears that Mr. Keach had laboured in Goat-street, when Mr. William Rider *
(* Mr. William Rider, Mr. Keach's predecessor, is mentioned by Mr. Danvers,
in his _Treatise of Baptism,_ as practising laying on of hands after baptism, and
as having defended it by writing on the subject.)

was the pastor, about twenty years before he accepted the pastoral office: this probably
arose from the unsettled state of the congregation, and from the frequent interruptions
they experienced from the violence of their persecutors. In 1688 he was solemnly
ordained as the pastor, by the imposition of the hands of elders of other churches. After
this, through the blessing of God upon his ministry, they quickly increased to a very
considerable number; and had frequent occasion to enlarge their place of worship, so that
it was at last capable of containing nearly a thousand people. This is said to have been the
first church, among the Baptists, which practised singing in public worship. For twenty
years it was attended to only at the Lord's Supper, and it was not introduced into the
worship generally, without much difficulty, nor even without producing a separation in
the church.

In the year 1697 Mr. Keach published, _The Articles of the Faith of the Church of Christ,
or congregation meeting at Horselydown, Benjamin Keach, pastor, as asserted this 10th of
5th month 1697._ This is dedicated, _To the congregation with whom I am an unworthy
member, (and the unworthy overseer,) who are in God the Father, and in the Lord Jesus
Christ; grace, mercy, and peace, be multiplied. Most dear and beloved in Christ. I hope I
can say (with the holy apostle) that you are by me dearly beloved, *my joy, and my crown*;
yea, you are my honour, in whom I will rejoice, being the ornament of my poor ministry,
by which the most of you have (through the blessing of God) been converted to Jesus
Christ: and if you stand fast in the faith in one spirit, striving together for the faith of the
gospel, and do adorn your profession, living in love and endeavouring to keep the unity
of the Spirit in the bond of peace, you will cause my latter days to be most sweet and
comfortable to me, after all those troubles, sorrows, and reproaches I have met with, both
from within and without. Evident it is God had most marvelously appeared to strengthen
your hands; *though the archers have sorely grieved you and shot at you*, yet your bow
abideth in strength; and that the arms of your hands may still abide strong by the hands of
the mighty God of Jacob, shall be my continual prayer._

One reason assigned by Mr. Keach for publishing this small work is thus expressed:
_Though you agree in general with all other churches of the same faith, in all those
articles there inserted, yet, therein your whole faith is not comprehended, viz. that of
imposition of hands upon baptized believers as such, and singing God's praise, &c.
because some of our churches dissent from us therein; yet my desire is you would
nevertheless shew all tenderness, charity, and moderation towards those who differ from
you in those cases, and not refuse communion with them,_ &c.

1704: Mr. Benjamin Keach.

These articles are signed by Benjamin Keach, pastor; Benjamin Stinton, teacher; John
Roberts, Edward Foley, Joshua Farrow, Thomas Stinton, John Valley, Isaac Ballard,
deacons; and forty-two men members. To the thirty-nine articles are added a postscript
explaining the sense in which they understood what is said, (speaking of a person actually

and personally justified) that _his sins past, present, and to come, are all forgiven._ It is dated _From my house in Freeman_s-lane, by Horselydown; Southwark, Aug. 16, 1697._ There is a large account of Mr. Keach in the former volumes of this history. The books which he published amounted to forty-three. Of these writings respectful notice is taken in a work which is not remarkable for its liberality, especially towards the Baptists. _His two most celebrated pieces are his *Tropologia, or a key to open Scripture metaphors*, in two volumes folio, published in 1692, and his *Gospel Mysteries unveiled, or an Exposition of all the Parables*, folio, published 1704. Both are books for which the Christian world are under great obligations to the author. He has, indeed, heaped together everything he could collect and it requires judgment in the reader to separate what is good, from what is fanciful and strained, and not to the purpose. But still we are very much indebted to Mr. Keach, for doing so fully and so well, on both topics what no Englishman had done before. On the Continent tropology had been studied with the most assiduous attention; and some valuable treatises had been written on the subject, but none had so successfully cultivated it at home. To the honour of Mr. Keach, and as the strongest proof of their value, both these performances are still in request, and continue to be sold at a high price to the present day._ *

(* *History of Dissenters* by the Rev. David Bogue and the Rev. James Bennett, in four volumes. vol. ii. p.267.)

1704: Mr. Benjamin Stinton.

Mr. Keach died July 18, 1704, and was succeeded by Mr. Benjamin Stinton, who had married one of his daughters. His excellent father-in-law, knowing his abilities as a minister, and believing that the church would fix on him as his successor, charged him on his death bed, not to refuse their call if they should think fit to make choice of him; adding, with great earnestness, that if he did not accept it, he would reject the call of God, and could not expect the divine blessing to attend him. It was with great difficulty that the church prevailed upon him, but the dying words of Mr. Keach, and the repressing earnestness of the church, at length let him to consent.

Mr. Stinton was born February 2, 1676. He was about thirty years of age when he settled as pastor of this church. He proved a very judicious and laborious minister of the gospel. He had not the advantage of an academical education for the ministry, yet by vigorous application under the tuition of the famous Mr. Ainsworth, after he had commenced the ministerial employment, he acquired a good degree of knowledge in the languages, and other useful parts of literature, which added lustre to his natural endowments which were very perspicuous.

His usefulness in establishing the Maze-pond school has been already noticed. He was also very instrumental, if not the first mover in establishing the Baptist Fund, though he strongly disapproved of one of its regulations: viz. _That it should be for the use and advantage of those churches only, who go under the denomination of Particular Baptists;_ and he accordingly entered his protest against it.

1718: Mr. Benjamin Stinton.

Mr. Stinton appears to have enjoyed the esteem and confidence of the public in a high degree; and he was thus enabled to render many acts of kindness to persons in distressed circumstances. His prudent conduct and complaisant behaviour, procured for him the respect of many persons who had no good will towards Dissenters in general. It is said, he was of a truly catholic spirit, and much frequented the company of ministers of other denominations, though he adhered firmly to his peculiar principles, and was zealous in defending them. He always endeavoured to cultivate harmony among Christians of different sentiments, being far from making those principles of religion which he disapproved, a reason for treating their persons with indifference or contempt. He was a consistent Calvinist; steering clear of Arminianism on the one hand and Antinomianism on the other.

His death was very sudden and unexpected to his friends, having been with several of them in the city the day before. He was taken ill in the evening, and was in great pain during the night, but was somewhat relieved in the morning. But to the great surprise of Mrs. Stinton, he lay down upon his pillow and said, *‘I am going,’* and died immediately, Feb. 11, 1718, in the forty-third year of his age.

He was buried in the Baptists’ burying ground, Deadmans’-place, in the park, Southwark.*

(* The entrance to this burying ground was in Queen-street; Mr. Benjamin Coxhead was a drawing of it: a large elegant door-case was of Portland stone, and in the year 1817 was in good preservation. Queen-street is now called Union-street; and the spot where the burying-ground was is in the centre of Little Guildford-street, Peter-street, White Cross-street, and Union-street.)

The Rev. David Rees of Wapping, who was to have preached his funeral sermon, was prevented by illness. It was therefore preached by the Rev. Thomas Harrison of Little Wild-street, at Mr. Killinghall’s meeting-house in Deadmans’-place. After Mr. Rees was recovered he preached the sermon he had prepared, at the meeting-house in Horselydown, before a numerous assembly. The text was the concluding sentence of a funeral sermon, which Mr. Stinton had preached on the Lord’s day preceding his death; *‘Be ye also ready.’* Neither of the funeral sermons were published; but Mr. Thomas Harrison, in a volume of poems on divine subjects, added one, *‘To the memory of Mr. Stinton,’* in which he speaks of him, and Mr. John Maisters lately deceased, as *‘the two chief pillars of the Baptist interest, laid on the ground.’*

Mr. Stinton published *‘A sermon preached at Little Wild-street, Nov. 27, 1713, in commemoration of the great and dreadful storm, in Nov. 1703.’* This is said to have been published *‘at the desire of several gentlemen who annually observe that day.’* Third edition, 1714. He published also a sermon entitled, *‘Of Divine Providence; occasioned by the demise of her late Majesty Queen Anne, and the happy accession of our present Sovereign King George to the throne of Great Britain.’* Second edition, 1714.

As a specimen of Mr. Stinton’s sentiments and manner of preaching, the following brief extract is made from this sermon. When speaking of the obligations Christians were under to praise God, he says, *‘The principal mercy of all, (viz. our redemption,) is also from him; it is he who in infinite goodness hath pitied us in our lost and miserable condition, who hath provided a remedy for our malady, and seasonably applies it for our recovery. Our deliverance from the bondage of sin, from the tyranny of Satan, and from the jaws of eternal death, and our title to life everlasting, are all owing to his rich mercy,*

through Jesus Christ our Lord. If he had not graciously interposed between us and ruin, we had sunk irrevocably into endless misery, and perished in our iniquities, and had become the prey of the devil and the triumph of hell. But oh, goodness truly divine! He hath laid help upon one that is mighty and able to save in our forlorn state, when helpless and hopeless. *He raised up for us an horn of salvation, in the house of his servant David, as he spake by the mouth of all his holy prophets, that by him we should be saved from our enemies, and from the hand of them that hate us.* Luke 1:69. Now for a mercy so incomparably great, for a mercy so absolutely necessary, so universally desirable, and every way so suitable to perfect our happiness, and which we are utterly unworthy of, how great and how universal are our obligations!_

He left in manuscript a small piece, entitled, *_A short Catechism, wherein the Principles of the Christian Religion are taught in the words of the Sacred Scriptures themselves._* This was repeatedly printed, but is now unknown.

He had been for some years collecting materials to write a history of the English Baptists, from the beginning of Christianity to that time. He had arranged the introduction, giving an account of the different opinions entertained of the origin of the Baptists. This was published after his death, by Crosby, in the preface to his first volume. He had designed to conclude his projected history with an abridgment of the controversy between the Baptists and Paedobaptists, and a catalogue of the books that had been published upon the subject since the Reformation in England. But his sudden and premature death prevented the accomplishment of this design.

The manuscript of Mr. Stinton was used by Mr. David Rees in his excellent piece on Baptism. Crosby gives this account of it: *_It is now many years since the materials, of which a great part of the treatise is formed, came into my hands. Had the ingenious collector of them lived to digest them in their proper order, according to his design, they would have appeared to much greater advantage._* The only part of the work Mr. Stinton had completed, was what he had prepared for the introduction, containing the opinions of ancient writers on the subject of baptism.

At the request of Mr. Edward Wallin, and Mr. William Arnold, Mr. Crosby sent Mr. Stinton's materials to Mr. Neal, when he was preparing his celebrated history, thinking he would include the history of the Baptists under that of the general term of Puritans. After keeping the manuscripts several years, the whole of what he said of them was comprized in less than five pages of this third volume. It was this circumstance, and the unkind reflections upon the few Baptist ministers whose names he condescended to notice, that furnished the reasons why Mr. Crosby published his *_History of the Baptists._* Some idea of Mr. Neal's want of impartiality might be formed from the circumstance of his having found no room among the Puritans for such men as Cheare, Bunyan, Gifford, Keach, Kiffin, and Stennett; men who suffered more for the principles of nonconformity in the reigns of Charles and James, than any others of the puritan ministers, whether Presbyterians or Independents.

At the death of Mr. Stinton, the church in Goat-street divided in choosing a successor. One part ultimately fixed themselves in Unicorn-yard, and the other in Carter-lane. As both these churches used the place in Goat-street, the writer, whose only business is to state facts, proceeds to give their history in the order in which they succeeded in the occupancy of the old meeting-house.

VOLUME III.

BOOK. II.

1719: Church in Unicorn-yard.

CHURCH IN UNICORN-YARD.

THIS church was composed of part of the congregation of Mr. Benjamin Keach, as already related. At the death of Mr. Benjamin Stinton a dispute arose about choosing a successor in the pastoral office. Some of the people called Mr. John Gill to that office; while others, and those some of the most respectable for age, for office, and for property were dissatisfied with, and protested against the manner in which the election was conducted; objecting also to the majority as being on the side of Mr. Gill, from its never having been the practice of the females to vote.

This matter of dispute was referred by both parties to the society of ministers; and the most impartial way of giving the history will be to copy the letter sent by the ministers, as they were desirous, if possible, to prevent the expected separation.

They say, _The ministers met together at the Hanover Coffee-house, Oct. 8, 1719, from what has appeared before them, are of opinion, that in the previous question put to the church in Horselydown on the eleventh of September last, _Whether to proceed at that time to the choice of a pastor or not,_ the majority of the brethren were against proceeding at that time. And they likewise are of opinion that it is of the nature of the previous question determined by the majority of the brethren, for deferring the election of a pastor to some future opportunity for trial, that there ought to be such opportunities given to Mr. Gill to exercise his ministry in the church. And accordingly do advise that Mr. Gill may preach in Horselydown as probationer one part of the day so long as the church shall think fit, and that they who dissented from the choice of Mr. Gill do make provision for the other part of the day.

Signed in the name of the rest

Oct. 8, 1719.

EDWARD WALLIN, Moderator._

Those who objected to Mr. Gill say, _When we had received this advice, we by all due means persuaded Mr. Gill and his adherents to return, and conform themselves hereto, as we were resolved to do; but they refused. That nothing might be wanting on our part to preserve the peace of the church, we by the following writing declared our minds:___Whereas our brethren adhering to Mr. Gill have not conformed themselves to the advice of the ministers; and that we may do all we can to restore peace and unity, and give them yet further proof of our sincere desire to preserve the peace of the church; we declare that if Mr. Gill, and those who adhere to him, will conform themselves to the advice of the ministers as aforesaid, we are willing on our parts, if they will do the same, to declare under our hands, that if after hearing Mr. Gill, or any other candidate or candidates, the majority of votes shall fall on Mr. Gill, or any other candidate, we will endeavour to keep our communion with the church, though we should not be entirely satisfied, we will peaceably withdraw, and not endeavour to set up a separate meeting on any pretence whatever._ But this proposal, as all our other endeavours, proved

unsuccessful; nothing would satisfy, unless we could receive Mr. Gill as pastor of the church, which we would by no means do._

The following is said in their records to have been the state of the case respecting the members who remained at Goat-street, and those who left it with Mr. Gill. *

(* Mr. Gill and his friends had withdrawn themselves from the place in Goat-street, and had conducted worship in the school-room of Mr. Thomas Crosby, afterwards the author of the *History of the English Baptists*.)

Remained, 122 members, including six deacons, viz. John Valley, John Seamor, James Brouse, Abraham Atkins, John Yorke, Josiah Keene. Removed with Mr. Gill, 99 members, twenty-four men and seventy-five women; including one deacon, Mr. Thomas Crosby. Mr. Gill's friends now proposed two questions to the people in Goat-street. 1. _Whether they were willing to come to a scrutiny, to see where the majority was on the day of election? 2. Whether if they were not willing to do so, they could not agree to dismiss each other?_ The people in Goat-street abode by their former proposals, and proceeded to choose Mr. William Arnold as their pastor. They continued in Goat-street till the expiration of the lease at mid-summer 1720, and then gave it up to Mr. Gill and his friends, agreeing to take ten pounds of them for the pews which they had erected. In May 1723, the following persons who had separated with Mr. Gill, desired permission to return to their former communion, viz. Thomas Crosby, Elizabeth Stinton, Susan Keach, Rachel Carter, Rebecca Crosby, Benjamin Stinton, Susan Stinton, and Elizabeth Fisher.

It is not easy to settle the question which of these parties should be considered as the church. The people who afterwards chose Mr. Arnold said, that the decision was come to respecting Mr. Gill, after a majority had determined to defer the consideration of the question: those who chose Mr. Gill said, that a majority had decided the election, and they were willing to submit to a scrutiny, which was not agreed to. Mr. Gill's friends, therefore, formed themselves into a church state, March 2, 1719_20; the records of the other part remarking, _ N.B. They were never dismissed from us._

1720: Church in Unicorn-yard.

The new meeting-house which had been erected in Unicorn-yard, was opened for public worship Jan. 26, 1720._Mr. Jeremiah Owen, an aged Independent minister who had been recently baptized, preached in the morning, and the Rev. Thomas Harrison, of Little Wild-street, in the afternoon.

This meeting-house, though not very large, is a good convenient building, with three galleries and a commodious vestry: it will contain about five hundred persons.

The church in Goat-street had sent three members to the Baptist fund from its commencement, and this part of it while it continued in Goat-street, immediately introduced Mr. Arnold as their pastor: their collection for the first year after their separation was sixteen pounds.

1720: Mr. William Arnold.

MR. WILLIAM ARNOLD was born in the West of England, in 1681; and it appears he was called by grace about the time of his marriage, when a change in his heart and

conversation was wrought, surprising to himself and all about him. Being noticed as a man of uncommon seriousness, spirituality, and affection, especially in the discharge of the duty of prayer, for which he was very eminent, _the church,_ as it is expressed, _solicited a taste of his gift in expounding the Scriptures._ This was a matter which, in his opinion, was so weighty, and of such moment and importance, that he spent a great deal of time in seeking counsel from God; and in advising with ministers, especially with that eminent minister, Mr. Davison, of Trowbridge. From their encouraging him to undertake the work, after having carefully examined him in his knowledge and experience, and the repeated importunities of the church, he at last, with some degree of resolution, though with much fear and trembling, engaged to go out in the strength of the Lord to publish the glad tidings of salvation. He had not long been thus engaged, before God gave him some remarkable seals to his ministry, which greatly strengthened his faith, and encouraged him to proceed. He now gave himself wholly to reading, study, meditation, and prayer; nor was it in vain, for his profiting appeared unto all, and he soon became very great favourite with all the churches among whom he was called to minister. It was these eminent qualifications which recommended him to the notice of the destitute congregation in Goat-street. That part of the church which invited him to the pastoral office were very hearty and unanimous in their choice; but he considered the office so very responsible, that he took several months to consider it before he complied with their request, nor did he engage in it without having obtained the opinion and encouragement of the ministers in London. He was ordained Nov. 15, 1720. When the Rev. David Rees, of Limehouse, began the service by prayer, Mr. Thomas Harrison gave him the charge, Mr. Joseph Burroughs preached to the church, and Mr. Benjamin Wallin concluded in prayer. There were present Mr. Galloway and Mr. Matthews, Presbyterian ministers, Messrs. Kinch, Mulliner, Beddome, Kimber, Slater, and Benwick. The church at this period consisted of a hundred and twenty-two members.

Mr. Arnold appears to have been a very respectable and useful minister for about twelve years. In addition to supplying his own congregation, he preached in the evening lectures of Horselydown, Silver-street, and Devonshire-square.

For about two years before his death he was greatly interrupted in his ministerial work by bodily indisposition. It was thought that the death of Mr. Edward Wallin, his very intimate friend, in 1733, so much afflicted him, that he was never well afterwards.

1734: Mr. William Arnold.

_The Monday before he died, on May 17, 1734, he asked his physicians with his usual cheerfulness, what they thought of him. When they told him there was danger in his case, they were no sooner withdrawn, but he said to his friends, with his hands lifted up to heaven, and with an air of pleasure and satisfaction in his countenance, _now I am going, I am going home, I am going to glory._ Upon this he sent for his children, took a solemn and affectionate leave of them, and with the authority of a minister, and the affection of a parent, recommended to them their duty to God, to one another, and how they ought to walk in the world.

_Tuesday being appointed by the church as a day of humiliation, fasting, and prayer, on his account, he sent them the following message, which he spoke with the utmost zeal

and most melting affection, though he was so weak as to be supported by two persons, whilst he delivered it.

— I desire, said he to an officer of the church, then present, you will be a mouth for me, this day to the church: give my love to them as a fellow-member, as a minister of Christ, and as their pastor. Tell them that I am now going *to my God, and their God; to my Father, and to their Father*: I desire them all to join in praises to God, for the exceeding abundant riches of his grace and mercy to me. These words, *Thy sins, which are many and great, are forgiven*, they have been set home upon my soul, with such power and joy which almost overset the tabernacle; they were words once to me, as life from death, and now they are life in death. I am concerned for that little hill in mount Sion. Some of them, I believe, are seals to my ministry, and will be my joy and crown of rejoicing in the day of Christ. They have long been a creditable and reputable church; they are now so; and it is my desire they may continue in credit and reputation after my decease. I now take my farewell of them, and commit them to the care of the great Shepherd and Bishop of souls. Let them wait on God, that he may give them a pastor after his own heart, to feed them with knowledge and understanding. I desire them to shew their love and value for me, by uniting in love and affection one to another; and by filling up their places in the church, prove that they gave not up themselves to a minister, but to the Lord, and to one another. I desire them to walk closely together in holy communion and fellowship with God and one another; and then they may expect to meet death with joy and comfort, as I now do. And so I take my leave of them, expecting to see them in a little time; and that we shall be companions again together, and be for ever with the Lord.

— After this, when he had bid his last adieu, in a very solemn manner, to many of his friends, and several brethren in the ministry, he said, in the close of that day, Now my work is done: and desired to see no more company.

— Wednesday he was in the same frame of spirit, rejoicing in the Lord, and longing for his dissolution.

— Thursday evening, being asked whether his comfort continued, he answer, with his hands lifted up, Yes, without the least cloud; Satan has not been suffered to interrupt it.

— Friday morning, the morning on which he entered into glory, about an hour before he died, he said to some friends, You will be asked by the world, how I went off; you are my witnesses, that I declare with my dying breath, that my firm faith and dependence is on the blood, righteousness, and satisfaction of the Lord Jesus Christ, for my acceptance in the sight of God. After this, thanking them for all their kindness, he wished, in the most affectionate manner, that *his God might be their God*, and that they might be eternal companions with him in glory. One of them perceiving the near approach of death, said, Sir, you seem to be very low; he answered with a kind of rapture, LOW! No, I am mounting up as fast as I can. Upon her saying, Sir, do you feel any pain? He answered, No, I bless the Lord I feel no pain; he has made my passage easy. Some of his last words were, I am an instance of sovereign and distinguished grace, *a brand plucked out of the burning*. A few minutes after this he fell sweetly asleep in Jesus, and died without a sigh, groan, or complaint.

Mr. Arnold was interred in the burying ground behind the Meeting. Mr. Samuel Wilson delivered the address at the grave, and on Lord's day following, May 26, he preached a funeral sermon, founded on Luke 7:47. *Her sins which are many are forgiven her*. This

passage, the preacher observes, was the last seal which the Spirit of adoption affixed to the soul of the deceased, before it broke the prison of clay, and entered on the work and happiness of heaven.

As to his public ministry it appears he had been a faithful servant of Christ. Appealing to the congregation, Mr. Wilson thus speaks of him: _How he has fulfilled his ministry among you, you are the best judges; and I believe he has a testimony in every one of you, that with the utmost diligence, seriousness, affection, and faithfulness, he has declared to you the whole counsel of God. The more substantial and soul-edifying truths of the gospel, were the subjects he wholly insisted on. Saints and sinners, babes and fathers in Christ, Sion_s mourners, the poor, the afflicted, the tempted, and distressed, the young and the aged, every one in the family had his portion: nor was he satisfied with pleasing the ear, but laboured in the strength of the Lord, to speak to the heart and conscience; and it was with that spirituality and savour, as abundantly discovered that he tasted and handled of the word of life in his own soul, whilst he held it forth to others.

His method was easy, just, and natural; his diction strong and masculine, yet plain and familiar; his gesture and deportment graceful and becoming. He well knew how to clothe his words with authority, when as a son of thunder, he had to deal with the stupid conscience of a rebellious sinner; nor was he at a loss in discovering the greatest tenderness, sympathy, compassion, and affection, when, as a son of consolation, he was sent with the message of peace to the humble penitent believer, of a broken heart, and a contrite spirit; and as he was richly furnished with gifts and graces, which rendered him an able minister, so the work of God prospered in his hands. Many converts were gathered in, who dated their first saints serious impressions to a blessing of God upon his labours. The saints found him under a divine agency to be a helper of their faith, joy, and consolation.

In speaking of his Christian character, Mr. Wilson says. _ I might say much of his natural abilities and I believe every one that knew him will allow, that for a ready discerning of men and things, a lively imagination, a solid judgment,_ a strong and tenacious memory, he had few equals. And as he has often expressed how thankful he should have been (so far was he from slighting or despising a regular education) could he have read the sacred oracles in the original languages, so Providence seemed, in a great measure, to make up this defect by blessing him with an industrious spirit. He thought no pains too much in reading the best English divines, and consulting the most judicious commentators, to come to the sense of the Holy Ghost, in passages more difficult and obscure: and in this he was so successful, that men of the greatest capacity, and the most improved literature, often attended his ministry with pleasure and advantage. He was indeed a skilful workman, who needed not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.

_His natural disposition was good, his conversation most agreeable; an innocent cheerfulness, attended with proper prudence, discovered itself upon almost every occasion; so that he had as many friends as acquaintance, nor could you be in his company long, without improvement and delight.

_ In his family he was a tender husband, and most affectionate father, conscientious and constant in the discharge of relative duties. In the world few more inoffensive; courteous to all, ready to do good offices even to strangers, faithful and sedulous in the service of his friends; and some have thought as a second cause, that the last great breach upon his

constitution, was owing to his zeal and application for the prosperity of one whom he loved as a brother._

In fulfilling the duties of his office in presiding at the church-meetings it is said, _He knew how to keep his place without lording it over God_s heritage; and few ministers were more zealous in preserving the purity and maintaining the discipline of the church._

1736: Mr. Thomas Flower.

The enjoyments which he had of divine things led him often to express great concern for the Deists, who deny a divine revelation; because, he said, They must be wholly destitute of any degree of that sweet consolation which he had received from the promises contained in the word of God: particularly he mentioned these words, *The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin*, as the great support of his dying hours.

Mr. Arnold left a family of fatherless children; in addressing these, Mr. Wilson, with much feeling said, _My soul grieves with you, and for you; you have lost the best of fathers; but there is a Father in heaven who made him that kind affectionate parent he was to you, and who only can make up your loss: think over his dying words, and be much in seeking that God, who has promised to be a father to the fatherless._

Mr. Crosby, who knew him intimately, says of him, _It may be justly said of Mr. Arnold, according to the wisdom of this world, that he was a man of no learning. But when delivering himself from the pulpit, such was the correctness of his discourses, that they were not inferior to the most learned of his brethren: he appeared to be a solid and able divine._

After Mr. Arnold_s death, the church invited Mr. Hugh Evans, of Bristol; he preached for a short time upon probation, but as the congregation of Broadmead were unwilling to part with him, he declined the invitation. In 1735 Mr. Clendon Dawkes was some time upon trial; but the choice of the people ultimately centered in Mr. THOMAS FLOWER, JUN. The father of this minister was Mr. Thomas Flower, pastor of the church at Bourton-upon-the-Water, who died there in 1740. His ordination at Unicorn-yard was on April 29, 1736. Mr. John Gill and Mr. John Brine commenced in prayer; Mr. Biddle, of Deptford, asked the usual questions of the church and the minister; Mr. Flower, sen. prayed the ordination prayer; Mr. Samuel Wilson gave the charge; Mr. Braithwaite preached to the people, and Mr. Dew concluded the service.

1744: Mr. Thomas Flower.

After being pastor of the church about eight years, Mr. Flower resigned the office; after which he preached for some time as a probationer at Abingdon, Berks; but was not invited to settle as pastor. It is supposed he afterwards supplied for a time at Horsley, Gloucestershire, and then settled at Cirencester, July 25, 1747, where he resided about fourteen years. Here he preached every other Lord_s-day, and the other half of his time he preached at Cheltenham. He left Cirencester about 1761, and returned to London. He never after took the charge of any church but preached occasionally. While in the country

he preached at an Association held at Broadmead, Bristol, in 1758. He had been educated at Bristol, under Mr. Bernard Foskett. The above particulars are from the manuscripts of Mr. Joshua Thomas; who adds, _ He was a person of considerable wealth. I have been informed by a good judge that he had certainly great talents, and was affectionate in the pulpit, but had not the best utterance._

Though Mr. Flower continued to preach occasionally, it should seem his true character was that of a tradesman, as he was distinguished by the appellation of _worldly-minded Flower._ He lived, after he had looked back towards the world instead of following the gospel plough, and had thus proved himself not fit for the kingdom of God, about twenty-three years; and after having procured what was called _a handsome subsistence,_ he died September 3, 1767, aged 61 years, and was buried in Bunhill-fields. Mr. Flower published a volume consisting of thirteen sermons, in 1740, and a funeral sermon preached at Cirencester at the interment of Mr. Elizabeth Bluckwell, who died April 5, 1754, in the eighty-third year of her age.

It was during the time of Mr. Flower that the church in Unicorn-yard was agitated with a question which seems never before to have been considered among the Baptists as a matter of _doubtful disputation._

1742: Mr. Thomas Flower.

On February 14, 1741_2, a charge was exhibited at the church-meeting, against a Mr. Baskerville, of walking disorderly in taking the sacrament in the church of England, in order to execute the office or trust of common council-man of the city, which was apprehended to be a profanation of that sacred institution. Mr. Baskerville admitted these facts, but declared he would not have done it, had not the laws of England required it as a necessary qualification for that trust. A large majority of brethren gave it as their opinion that it was a profanation of the ordinance of the Lord_s Supper; Mr. Baskerville complained of this as destructive of the right of private judgment, and said, from the love he bore to all the members of the church, he was grieved that his conduct had given them offence.

Mr. Baskerville, on being privately admonished by the pastor and some of the deacons, in the name of the church, again professed sorrow that his conduct had caused them grief; but added, _As to the matter which has given the occasion of their grief, I remain still of the same mind, and unless I receive further conviction shall, if alike called to it, do the same again: but I will endeavour to obtain conviction, and examine the arguments and pray for further illumination, if I am in an error; and do promise that I will never take the sacrament in the church of England again without first acquainting the church with it, and if they vote it unlawful shall desire a dismissal from them to join some other church._

The church having regard to Mr. Baskerville_s acknowledgment of sorrow for the offence, and to his promises, agreed he should be continued in their communion; though they continued of the same mind, yet for the sake of peace they agreed he should still

enjoy the ordinances with them, &c. The further particulars of this affair may be found in the events of the year 1742_3 p. 228 to 233.

1745: Mr. Josiah Thompson.

MR. JOSIAH THOMPSON, who succeeded as pastor, was a son of the Rev. Josiah Thompson, who resided at Kinston-upon-Thames, and who will be spoken of under the article Pershore, Worcestershire.

This young minister had been called to the work by the church in Prescott-street, and was dismissed from them to Unicorn-yard, November 25, 1744. On February 23, 1745_6, he was publicly ordained to the pastoral office; when Mr. Edward Wallin began the service by prayer, Mr. Samuel Wilson asked the questions and gave the charge to the minister, Mr. Thompson, senior, prayed the ordination prayer, and Mr. Joseph Stennett preached to the people. Mr. Thompson concluded the service.

Mr. Thompson was an educated man, but he does not appear to have done much good as a minister, or to have been very laborious in his Master_s work.

He resigned his charge August 16, 1761. During two years from 1757 to 1759, he was assisted by Mr. (afterwards Dr.) Caleb Evans. Mr. Thompson preached in the afternoons to Dr. Savage_s congregation, in Bury-street, which was near his residence in St. Mary-Axe. He retired to Clapham Common, to live upon his fortune, after giving up his pastoral office in Unicorn-yard, through ill health, and spent the remainder of his days as a retired gentleman. He died in June, 1806, at the advanced age of eighty-two.

The church was, as might have been expected, in a very low condition when Mr. Thompson left it; the feelings and habits of a gentleman, unless rendered subservient to the edification of the church, by an humble attention to the wishes and necessities of the people of his charge, are unfavourable to the welfare of our churches. Those ministers who think worldly pomp and distinction necessary to their happiness, would find the Established Church much more congenial to their inclinations than the state of society in Dissenting communities.

Mr. Thompson had made some manuscript collections of the History of the Baptist Churches, which have been of use in compiling this work. Two large volumes were deposited at his death in Dr. Williams_s Library, Red-Cross-street.

VOLUME III.

BOOK. II.

1757: Church in Carter-lane.

CHURCH IN CARTER-LANE.

THAT part of the church in Goat-street which chose Mr. John Gill, met in the school-room of Mr. Thomas Crosby until the lease of the place, formerly Mr. Keach_s and Mr. Stinton_s expired, when Mr. Gill and his friends took possession of it, and occupied it, till they built the new place in Carter-lane, in 1757, where the prosperous congregation which has so long enjoyed the labours of Dr. John Rippon, now assembles.

1697 1716: Dr. John Gill.

JOHN GILL, D.D. this eminently learned and laborious writer and preacher was born at Kettering, in Northamptonshire, Nov. 23, 1697. His father was Mr. Edward Gill, a member of the Dissenting congregation in that town, then composed of persons both Paedobaptists and Baptists. The latter having been rendered uncomfortable in their communion, were compelled to form a separate church, choosing Mr. William Wallis a preaching member of the church, who had previously baptized by immersion those of the congregation who desired it. Mr. Edward Gill and his wife were some of the first members, and continued so till their deaths. Mr. Gill soon became a deacon of the church, and obtained a good report for his grace, his piety, and holy conversation.

John his son discovered, at a very early period, a fine capacity for receiving instruction, and was sent when very young to the grammar-school in Kettering, kept by a member of the established church. By his uncommon diligence and application, he not only surpassed in learning all the scholars of his own age, but outstripped many who were his seniors. On the change which took place about this period in the measures of the Queen_s administration, the master insisted that all his scholars should attend the parish church, and learn the church catechism. John Gill_s parents, considering this injunction as imposition on the rights of conscience, removed their son from the school. He had, however, made so good use of his time, that though not more than twelve year of age, he had mastered the principal Latin classics, and had made such a proficiency in Greek as to obtain for him some marks of kind attention from several neighbouring clergymen, who occasionally exercised him, and encouraged his pursuits. It is said that when the bookseller_s shop was opened which was only on the market days, John Gill was always there for the sake of consulting different authors. This attracted so much attention, that it was common for people to confirm their statements with the asseveration, _It is as surely the case as that John Gill is in the booksellers shop._

His parents, not being in affluent circumstances, could not, as some others did, send John to some distant academy; and all the methods they devised to obtain for him the advantages of a literary education proved fruitless. Ministers, too, of different denominations endeavoured to procure assistance from some rich persons in London, and sent specimens of his attainments for that purpose. This also failed, as they received the discouraging reply, _that he was too young at present to be placed on the funds of any public institution, and that should he continue to acquire knowledge as he had already done, he would pass through the common circle of learning; before he would be old enough to engage in any public employment._

1716: Dr. John Gill.

Notwithstanding he was thus left to his own unassisted energies, he yet improved himself in Latin and Greek, and began the studies of logic and rhetoric, and natural and moral philosophy. With the help only of Buxtorf's Hebrew Grammar and Lexicon he made considerable proficiency in that language. At this time, and till he was nearly nineteen years of age, he assisted his father in weaving, improving all his spare time in the acquisition of the learned languages.

Some time before this he was brought under deep and lasting convictions of his sinful state. He had heard a sermon from Mr. William Wallin, from Gen. 3:9;—*And the Lord God called unto Adam, and said unto him, where art thou?* His distress of soul was for a time very great, but he was at length enabled to fly for refuge, to lay hold on the hope set before him, by receiving and resting upon the exceeding great and precious promises of the gospel.

On Nov. 1, 1716, Mr. Gill made a public profession of religion, by relating, to the satisfaction of the church, what God had done for his soul. On the same day Mr. Thomas Wallin, who had succeeded his deceased brother William in the pastoral office, baptized him in a river, in the presence of a large number of spectators. The following Lord's day, Nov. 4, he was admitted as a member of the church, and partook of the Lord's Supper. The members of the church having previously considered him as possessing gifts for the work of the ministry, desired him the same evening, at a private house, to speak from the Scriptures. He accordingly read the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah, on which he made some expository remarks: they were satisfied, that they requested him to deliver a sermon before them in the same private manner the next Lord's-day evening. This he complied with, and preached his first sermon from 1 Cor 2:2; *For I determined to know nothing among you; save Jesus Christ, and him crucified.* This was in the year 1716.

1719 – 71: Dr. John Gill.

He soon after removed, at the solicitation of some of his friends in London, to Higham Ferrars, a distance of six miles from Kettering. A minister from Wales, Mr. John Davis, had been settled there, and Mr. Gill hoped, by living in his house, to obtain from him assistance in his literary studies; the design of his friends was that he might also strengthen a new interest which had lately been formed at Higham. Mr. Gill continued here upwards of a year, and while at Higham married a member of the church, Elizabeth Negus, who lived with him happily in the marriage union upwards of forty-six years.

He had occasionally assisted the church at Kettering while at Higham Ferrars, and he very soon after his marriage removed back to Kettering. He did not however long continue, as he received a pressing invitation, at the beginning of the year 1719, to supply the church in Goat-street, Horsely-down, lately deprived of its pastor, the excellent Mr. Benjamin Stinton.

Mr. Gill preached at Goat-street during the months of April and May, and then returned to Kettering. Two months after, he was invited to come again to London, and on the 10th of March it was proposed to the church, _Whether he should be invited to undertake the pastoral office?_ This being wished by many of the members, he accepted the office on the 20th following. The other part, however, having the possession of the meeting-house,

Mr. Gill and his friends were compelled to leave it, and engaged Mr. Crosby's school-room for worship. In that place he was solemnly ordained over the church, March 22, 1720. Mr. John Skepp asked the usual questions of the church, and Mr. Crosby a deacon, (who afterwards published the *History of the Baptists*,) gave satisfactory replies on their behalf. Messrs. Matthews and Ridgeway prayed; Messrs. Curtis and Key assisted in laying on of hands, &c; and Mr. John Noble delivered the charge to the pastor, founded upon Acts 20:28. *Take heed to yourselves and all the flock, &c.* Mr. Skepp addressed the church from Heb. 13:17. *Obey them that have the rule over you, for they watch for your souls, &c.* Three deacons were also ordained at the same time by the imposition of the hands of the pastors present.

The church continued to worship in Mr. Crosby's schoolroom till the other branch of it had completed their new meeting-house in Unicorn-yard, when Mr. Gill and his people again took possession of the meeting-house in Goat-street.

From Mr. Gills intimate acquaintance with Mr. John Skepp, he was introduced to a knowledge of the Rabbinical Hebrew learning; and after Mr. Skepp's death, he purchased most of his Hebrew and Rabbinical books, to this circumstance is to be attributed his superior attainments in that sort of literature, which so conspicuously appears in his Exposition of the Scriptures.

The establishment of a lecture at Great East-cheap, which Mr. Gill preached for upwards of twenty-six years will be noticed in connection with the history of that church.

Having distinguished himself by many learned publications, Mr. Gill received, in 1748, a diploma, creating him D.D. from the Marischal College and University of Aberdeen. On that occasion Professor Osborn, the Principal, told him, in a letter, that it was granted him _on account of the honest and learned defence of the true sense of the Holy Scriptures, against the profane attacks of deists and infidels, and the reputation his other works had procured him in the learned world, &c._ When Dr. Gill was congratulated, by the deacons, on his having this honorary mark of literary distinction, he replied laconically, *_I neither thought it, nor bought it, nor sought it._* *

(* This degree appears to have been considered, both by the university which bestowed it, and the person who received it, as a distinction purely *literary*; the only ground, in the opinion of the writer, on which any minister of the gospel can be justified in using it. He feels happy to be supported in this sentiment by the conduct of his late excellent and lamented friend, Mr. Andrew Fuller. When a degree of D.D. was sent him from the Brown University Rhode Island College, he quaintly said, *_Now I must learn Latin in order to read it._* He did not undervalue the respect intended to be shewn him, but considered himself as not qualified to use it. A most eloquent preacher of the present day, told the writer his objections to receiving such a diploma which had been sent to him. *_If it be considered a religious distinction, said Mr. H. then I dare not accept it, because I consider it as directly opposed to our Lord's command, Be ye not called Rabbi. If it be a literary distinction then I do not consider myself as*

qualified to use it._ Reasons, which were, when used as in this case, expressive of great piety and great humility! Upon what rational principle the modern practice of ministers obtaining the degree of LL.D. rests, the writer is at a loss to conjecture. Johnson defines it as _the highest degree in the faculty of law;_ and the person who receives it wishes the world to believe him to be _an able or learned man._ Now, however learned or able such ministers may be in divinity, does it therefore follow they are also able or learned in the laws of the land? With just as much propriety might they receive the degree of M.D. though they know nothing of physic as LL.D knowing nothing of the laws. How must learned proctors smile, (perhaps not, however, except it be angrily and contemptuously,) to find a Dissenting minister, signing his name LL.D. Would it be wonderful if the address of Appelles to the cobbler was to be repeated in such a case?

These remarks are not intended to convey any censure upon the conduct of Dr. Gill, Dr. Gifford, Dr. Joseph or Dr. Samuel Stennett, Dr. Evans, or Dr. Jenkins, for having used the degree of D.D. as all of them were learned men. The writer has confined his observations to *deceased* Baptist ministers, though he believes the names of some *living* characters might have been mentioned with equal propriety.

In Doctor Rippon_s memoir of his predecessor Dr. Gill, he gives us the following copy of this diploma, which he remarks, _will be unquestionably a matter of innocent curiosity to some readers:_ –

*NOS Gymnasiarcha, Artium et Linguarum Professores,
Moderatores* UNIVERSITATIS MARISCHALLANAE ABEREENSIS –
OMNIBUS LITERARUM STUDIO S.

"Quum viri olim prudentissimi, Academiarum Collegiorumque fundatores, eum in finem gradus, quos vocant, Academicos excogitarunt et instituerint, ut bene postea de literis meritori haud ignobilia virtutis et ingenii premia nanciscerentur; id cur videtur Academiarum cujuscunque aevi Moderatorum fidei commissum, ut eximios hosce viros dispicerent, et congruis honoribus pro cujusque doctrina et meritis, ornarent; quumque Nobis compertum sit, virum reverendum JOANNEN GILL, A.M. Ecclesia apud Londinensis pastorem, praeclaros in Sacris Literis, Linguis Orientalibus et Antiquitatibus Judaicis progressus fecisse, cisque praeditum esse moribus, qui virum pium probunque deceant ac ornent. Propterea sciatis Nos Gymnasiarcham et Moderatores supra dictos, Eum summo consensu, S.S. Theologia Doctorem creasse et constituisse, omnibusque et singulis istius gradus privilegiis donasse, Ipsumque veris ubique Scientiae et Virtutis cultoribus sedulo commendatum habere Nos, qui chirographis nostris publicoque Universitatis sigillo Diploma hocce muniendum curavimus.

JOA. OSBORN, Gymnasiarcha.

_Datum Aberdeae

ROBERTUS POLLOCK, S.S.T.P.

Ex Universitate Marischallana

JA. DONALDSON, L.L.O.O.P.

Octavo Kal. Aprills

FRANCIS SKENE, P.P.

A. AE.C. M.DCC.XLIIX._

DAV. VERNOR, LL.D. et P.P.

JOANNES STEWART, Math. P.

DAVID FORDYCE, P.P.

JA. GORDON, Med. P.

TRANSLATION

WE, the Principal, the Professors of Arts and Languages, and the Regents of the Marischal College of Aberdeen, to all the Lovers of Learning, Greeting.

_Whereas in former ages men renowned for wisdom, the founders of Academies and Colleges, have invented and instituted what they call academical degrees, in order that they who should afterwards deserve well of learning might obtain suitable rewards of their virtue and genius; it appears to be a duty enjoined upon the Governors of Academies in every age, to look out for such eminent men, and to decorate them with suitable honours according to their respective learning and merits: and whereas we have discovered that the Reverend John Gill, A.M. Pastor of a Church at London, has made a very distinguished progress in Sacred Literature, the Oriental Languages, and Jewish Antiquities, and is endowed with those manners which become a pious and upright man; on these accounts know ye, that we, the Principal and Regents above-mentioned, have unanimously created and constituted him Doctor of Sacred Divinity, and endowed him with all and singular the privileges of that degree; and that we do hereby earnestly recommend him to the cultivators of Science and Virtue wherever they may be. In witness whereof we have signed this Diploma with our hands, and sealed it with the public seal of the University.

JOHN OSBORN, Principal

ROBERT POLLOCK, S.S.T.P.

_Given at the Marischal College,
L.L.O.O.P.

JAMES DONALDSON,

in the University of Aberdeen,

FRANCIS SKENE. P.P.

on the eighth of the Kalends

DAVID VERNOR, LL.D. and P.P.

of April, in the year of the

JOHN STEWART, Math. P.

Christian Aera, 1748._

DAVID FORDYCE, P.P.

JAMES GORDON, Med. P._

In the year 1752 the Doctor, as he must now be called, had a very providential escape from being killed in his study. On Lords Day, March 15, in the morning, there was a violent hurricane which damaged many houses both in London and Westminster.

Soon after leaving his study to attend public worship, a stack of chimnies were precipitated through the roof of his house, which broke his writing-table to pieces, at which he had been sitting but a little while before. Noticing this deliverance to a friend, he seriously observed in reply to what he had sometime before told the Doctor, that Dr. Halley said, Close study prolonged a man_s life, by keeping him out of harm_s way; _What,_ said he, _becomes of Dr. Halley_s words now, since a man may come to danger and harm in his closet, as well as on the highway, if not protected by the special care of God_s providence?_

It is not possible to notice all the incidents in the long life of this faithful servant of Christ. His last labours among the people of his charge, were some sermons from the song of Zacharias, Luke 1:78. The last text he preached from was, *By the remission of their sins, through the tender mercy of our God*. His health had been on the decay for some time, and he thought his work was done. The decay of nature, however, was very gradual, frequently attended with violent pain, and an almost total loss of appetite. He bore the visitation of his heavenly Father with patient composure, and with great resignation to the Divine will; never uttering a single complaint. Though he was prevented from preaching he continued busy in his study till within two or three weeks of his decease, and always appeared calm and cheerful.

In the prospect of his dissolution he thus expressed himself to his relation Mr. John Gill, pastor of the church at St. Albans, _I depend wholly and alone upon the free, sovereign, eternal, unchangeable love of God, the firm and everlasting covenant of grace, and my interest in the persons of the Trinity, for my whole salvation; and not upon any righteousness of my own; nor on any thing in me, or done by me, under the influences of the Holy Spirit;_ – and then as confirming what he had said, – _Not upon any service of mine, which I have assisted to perform for the good of the church, do I depend; but upon my interest in the persons of the Trinity, the free grace of God and the blessings of grace streaming to me through the blood and righteousness of Christ, as the ground of my hope. These are no new things to me, but what I have been long acquainted with; *what I can live and die by*. I apprehend I shall not be long here, but this you may tell to any of my friends._

Nearly in the same words he expressed himself to other friends. To one, he said, _I have nothing to make me uneasy;_ and then repeated the following lines of Dr. Watts, expressive of his gratitude for redeeming mercy; and that his comforts in death were not

derived merely from a view of the eternal purposes which ensured the salvation of the elect; but from a consciousness that he had through grace been enabled to rest as a poor guilty sinner, upon the finished work of the Redeemer.

 _He raised me from the deeps of sin,

 The gates of gaping hell,

And fix_d my standing more secure

Than _twas before I fell._ *

(*The writer once by accident went into a meeting-house in London, where the minister is a *very high* Calvinist. The clerk too, on that occasion, proved himself to be as *sound* as his minister! Being quite sure Dr. Watts had mistaken the subject, he ventured to alter the last two lines of the verse above mentioned, thus,

"And fix_d my standing *most* secure

In Christ before I fell."

It was easy to perceive that this sound clerk was *very high*; but then it was quite easy to discover that this scheme was not *scriptural*; as that standing could not be *most secure*, which did not prevent the elect from *falling*.)

The tranquility of soul and internal peace and joy he felt from thus *rejoicing in hope*, never left him; the last words he was heard to utter, were, _Oh my Father, my Father._ Thus expired the humble and holy John Gill, after having spent nearly sixty years in the service of Christ, expressing the disposition enjoined by our Lord upon his disciples, *After ye have done all say, we are unprofitable servants, we have done that which was our duty to do.*

Dr Gill died at his house in Camberwell, Surry, October 14, 1771, aged seventy-three years, ten months and ten days.

Dr. Samuel Stennett in his funeral sermon says, _That he was a man of strict integrity I believe all will acknowledge. But though his steadiness was such, that having come to a point with himself upon any opinion or fact, he was scarce ever to be removed from it yet, being convinced of his mistake he was ready to acknowledge it. And though he knew how with spirit to resent an injury, he knew how also with becoming meekness to endure and forgive it. His warmth may indeed upon some occasions exceed, yet he had prudence enough to check it; and failed not afterwards, like a good man as he was, to feel great pain on account of it. And however his inflexibility, his recluse manner of life, and the small share he bore in conversation, might excite in some persons an idea unfavourable to his character; yet he knew how to be obliging in his carriage to strangers, and would be

innocently pleasant with his friends; so that few left his house or his company, without some impressions to his advantage in these respects.

"His religious principles, which were strictly Calvinistical, he maintained with great warmth, – a warmth that proceeded, I doubt not, from a firm persuasion of their truth and importance. Yet amidst all his zeal, which was accompanied with undissembled piety, as well as unshaken integrity, he had a charitable and affectionate regard for those who held the grand leading principles of Christianity, though they could not agree with him in his explanation of some points. To exalt and magnify the free grace of God in the redemption and salvation of sinners, and to exclude all boasting on our part, were the grand objects of his discourses and writings. But the unfavourable consequences which too many were disposed to draw from his reasonings he constantly denied, and warmly opposed; maintaining the utility and importance of good works, and indeed their indispensable necessity as the fruit of the regenerating influence of the Holy Spirit to the character of the real Christian. And as he was himself most exemplary in his conversation, so he heartily concurred in every measure to discountenance a licentious conduct, especially in those who made a profession of religion. What grief he felt when at any time Christ was wounded in the house of his pretended friends, as well as the joy he felt when tidings of a different kind were brought him, his family and those who were acquainted with him well remember, nor will the remembrance thereof be easily erased from their minds._

His removal, says his biographer and successor, _was deeply felt. It spread a solemn gloom over the church in which he had honourably presided more than FIFTY-ONE years. They immediately assembled to consult on the best method of shewing the last token of respect to their departed, venerable, pastor. The church unanimously desired that they might have the honour, if not of making the arrangements for his funeral, yet of defraying the expenses of it. But the affluent circumstances and tender affection of the bereaved family induced them to decline the proposal which had been respectfully delivered to them by the deacons. On the day of interment, the members and hearers of the society, in a vast train of mourning coaches, affectionately followed his remains to the Dissenting burying-ground, Moorfields, where he was deposited in the family tomb, which is situated, according to the intersections by which the ground is divided, in the distance 19 east and west; and 65 and 66, north and south. His respected friend and admirer, the Rev. Mr. Toplady, then in the bloom of life, most earnestly desired he might officiate at the grave. This affectionate respect was suitably acknowledged, but Dr. Gill was conscientiously a Dissenter, though he might in his youth have been sent to one of the universities, had he and his parents approved of it. And as he finished his course, most intimately united to his own denomination, without even the semblance of a dereliction either of principle or practice, the church were happy in the appointment of the Rev. Benjamin Wallin, M.A. to deliver the address at his grave, and Dr. Samuel Stennett to preach the funeral discourse; (this he did from 2 Tim. 4:8.) though Dr. Gill had left directions behind him not to have any funeral sermon preached on his account, as he never was fond of these services. The address and sermon were printed; the numbers besides, which were preached all through Great Britain, and in various parts of America, when the providence was known, exceeded probably all that had ever been known before

or since respecting an individual,– proclaiming, as with the voice of unusual lamentation, *A great man is fallen in Israel.*—

—As a minister, in his early days,— says Dr. Rippon, —few persons were more animated than himself. He came into the pulpit, at times, with an heavenly lustre on his countenance, *in the fulness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ*; enriched, and generally enriching. —When the fervour of youth had abated, the attention of his congregation and the respect of the church, were secured to his preaching, by his solemn deportment, his expressive language, his perspicuous method, his nervous reasoning, his interesting address; and by his substantial matter accurately delivered. And all being ornamented with his own personal religion, and crowned with the superabundant influences of the Spirit of God, he sometimes preached as with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven, and poured out his prayers with divine fervency, into the very bosom of God. —As a pastor, he presided over his flock with dignity and affection. He felt himself exceedingly distressed when any of his people disgraced their profession by errors either in doctrine or in practice. From both sources he had his share of sorrows as the records of his faithful church discipline evince. — One extract proves that Dr. Gill was far from thinking the Antinomian scheme was not a very dangerous error. In his own handwriting is the following account of the result of the discipline of the church respecting some of its members. —Agreed, that to deny the internal sanctification of the Spirit, as a principle of grace and holiness which though but a begun work, and as yet incomplete, is an abiding work of grace, and will abide, notwithstanding all corruptions, temptations, and snares, and be performed by the Author of it until the day of Christ, when it will be the saint's meetness for eternal glory; is a grievous error, highly reflects dishonour on the blessed Spirit and his operations of grace on the heart, is subversive of true religion and powerful godliness, and renders persons unfit for church communion. Wherefore, it is further agreed, that such persons who appear to have embraced this error be not admitted to the communion of this church; and should any such who are members of it appear to have received it, and continue in it, that they be forthwith excluded from it. Two members then present declaring themselves to be of the opinion condemned in the above resolution, and also a third person who was absent, but who was well known to have been under the influence of this awful delusion, were consequently excluded that evening. — Dr. Rippon adds, —At church meetings he was admired, one while for his gentleness and fidelity, and another while for his self-possession and wisdom. And when it was necessary for him to *magnify his office*, (and no one knew better how to do it,) he discovered himself to be both a servant of Christ, and the servant of the church for his sake. — *

(* It is mentioned as an instance that the Doctor could, when he discovered sincerity in any of his complaining members, —bear with their weaknesses, failings and infirmities,— that when a pious old woman visited him to complain, in great trouble, about some new tune having been introduced by the Clerk, the Doctor, after patiently hearing her tale of woe, how her mind had been hurt, &c. — asked her, —Sister, do you understand singing? —No, sir. —What, can't you sing? —No, sir. — The Doctor did not run the risk of hurting her feelings, by saying, that the people who could not sing, and who did not understand, were the last who should trouble the pastor with such complaints; but meekly replied,

Sister, what tunes should you like us to sing? _Why, sir, I should very much like David_s tunes._ _Well,_ replied the Doctor, _if you will get David_s tunes for us, we can then try to sing them._ Another instance shews his manner of reproving *rudeness*. A cynical old man, who had an antipathy against the Doctor, more than once had grinned contempt from the gallery; and sometimes would meet him at the foot of the pulpit, asking contemptuously, _Is this preaching?_ He at first took no notice of this course of vulgarity; but some time after the same churlish man, meeting him as he came from the pulpit, said sarcastically, _Is this the great Dr. Gill?_ The Doctor immediately, with the full strength of his voice looking in his face, and pointing to the pulpit, said, *_Go up and do better – Go up and do better._* His friends who heard it said, it was *answering a fool according to his folly*. Perhaps it was wise, after having tried the other part of the direction in vain. *Answer not a fool according to his folly*. But after all, it might have been more wise had he continued to take no notice of a man capable of such rudeness.)

As an author, he was most indefatigable. It is said, _if all his writings had been collected, and had been uniformly printed in the size of his Exposition upon the Old and New Testaments, they would have made above ten thousand folio pages!_ All this was his own composition, the result of his own most laborious studies, written with his own hand, and published by his own care; no one reading the sheets as they came from the press but himself. In the year 1770 he wrote in the margin of a sheet of letter press which he intended should be the last for publication, *_the last of more than ten thousand!_*

I shall endeavour to give a list of his publications at the close of this brief sketch of a minister who was certainly an ornament to the denomination to which he considered it his honour to belong, and the distinctive principles of which he was always ready to defend; one instance of which may, perhaps, not be unnecessary to mention. In 1726, a pamphlet was published anonymously entitled, _The manner of baptizing with water cleared up from the word of God and right reason, &c._ This was in the form of a dialogue, and it afterwards appeared to have been written by Mr. Matthias Maurice, an Independent Minister, at Rowel, not far from Kettering. Dr. Gill was applied to by his old friends there to write an answer to it. This he did, and published it with the title, _The ancient Mode of Baptism by Immersion,_ &c. Mr. Maurice replied the next year, 1727; and Dr. Gill some months after published a rejoinder, entitled, _A Defence of the ancient Mode,_ &c. One of the members of Mr. Maurice_s church, an apothecary, named Cogan, wrote some remarks upon the rejoinder, in such a virulent and defamatory manner, that it was condemned of itself; and the writer, it is said, afterwards repented that he had published it! It was on occasion of this controversy that Mr. Gill received from Tilbury-fort a very spirited anonymous letter, urging him to follow up his victories, &c. The letter concluded with the following lines:_

_STENNETT, at first, his furious foe did meet,

Cleanly compelled him to a swift retreat;

Next powerful GALE, by mighty blast made fall

The church's Dagon, the gigantic *Wall*:

May you with like success be victor still,

And give your rude antagonist his fill,

To shew that GALE is yet alive in GILL.

Instead of attempting a description of Dr. Gill as a writer and a theologian, I shall copy from writers of other religious communities. The Rev. Augustus Montague Toplady, A.B. a clergyman of the church of England, thus describes him in a writing dated July 29, 1772: –

Such were the indefatigable labours, such the exemplary life, and such the comfortable death of this great and eminent person. If any one man can be supposed to have trod the whole circle of human learning it was Dr. Gill. His attainments, both in abstruse and polite literature, were (what is very uncommon) equally extensive and profound. Providence had, to this end, endued him with a firmness of constitution, and an unremitting vigour of mind, which rarely fall to the lot of the sedentary and learned. It would, perhaps, try the constitutions of half the *literati* in England, only to *read*, with care and attention, the whole of what he *wrote*.

The Doctor considered not any subject superficially, or by halves. As deeply as human sagacity, enlightened by grace, could penetrate, he went to the bottom of every thing he engaged in. With a solidity of judgment, and with an acuteness of discernment, peculiar to few, he exhausted, as it were, the very soul and substance of most arguments he undertook. His style, too, resembles himself; it is manly, nervous, plain; conscious, if I may so speak, of the unutterable dignity, value, and importance of the freight it conveys, it drives directly and perspicuously to the point in view, regardless of affected cadence, and superior to the little niceties of professed refinement.

Perhaps no man, since the days of St. Austin, has written so largely in defence of the system of grace; and, certainly, no man has treated that momentous subject, in all its branches, more closely, judiciously, and successfully. What was said of Edward the Black Prince, That he never fought a battle, which he did not win; what has been remarked of the great Duke of Marlborough, That he never undertook a siege, which he did not carry; may be justly accommodated to our great philosopher and divine: who, so far as the distinguishing doctrines of the gospel are concerned, never besieged an error, which he did not force from its strong holds; nor ever encountered an adversary, whom he did not baffle and subdue.

His learning and labours, if exceedable, were exceeded only by the invariable sanctity of his life and conversation. From his childhood to his entrance on the ministry, and from his entrance on the ministry to the moment of his dissolution, not one of his most inveterate opposers was ever able to charge him with the least shadow of immorality.

Himself, no less than his writings, demonstrated, that *the doctrine of grace does not lead to licentiousness*.

_Those who had the honour and happiness of being admitted into the number of his friends, can go still further in their testimony. They know that his moral demeanour was more than blameless; it was, from first to last, consistently exemplary. And, indeed, an undeviating consistency, both in his views of evangelical truths, and in his obedience, as a servant of God, was one of those qualities, by which his cast of character was eminently marked. He was, in every respect, *a burning and a shining light*— burning, with love to God, to truth, and to souls – shining, as *an ensample to believers, in word, in faith, in purity*; a pattern of good works, and a model of all holy conversation and godliness.

_The Doctor has been accused of bigotry, by some, who were unacquainted with his real temper and character. Bigotry may be defined, such a blind and furious attachment to any particular principle, or set of principles, as disposes to wish ill to those persons who differ from us in judgment. Simple bigotry, therefore, is, the spirit of persecution, without the power; and persecution is no other than bigotry, armed with force, and carrying its malevolence into act. Hence it appears, that to be clearly convinced of certain propositions, as true; and to be steadfast in adhering to them, upon that conviction; nay, to assert and defend those propositions, to the utmost extent of argument: can no more be called bigotry, than the shining of the sun can be termed ostentation. If, in any parts of his controversial writings, the Doctor has been warmed into some little neglects of ceremony toward his assailants; it is to be ascribed, not to bigotry, (for he possessed a very large share of benevolence and candour,) but to that complexional sensibility, inseparable, perhaps, from human nature in its present state; and from which, it is certain, the apostles themselves were not exempt.

_His doctrinal and practical writings will live, and be admired, and be a standing blessing to posterity, when their opposers are forgotten, or only remembered by the refutations he has given them. While true religion, and sound learning, have a single friend remaining in the British empire, the works and name of Gill will be precious and revered.

May the readers of this inadequate sketch, together with him, who (though of a very different denomination from the Doctor) pays this last and unexaggerated tribute of justice to the honoured memory of so excellent a person, participate, on earth, and everlastingly celebrate in heaven, that sovereign grace, which its departed champion so largely experienced, – to which he was so distinguished an ornament, – and of which he was so able to defender!

Mr. Walter Wilson says, in the History and Antiquities of Dissenting Churches, _Such were the life and death of Dr. Gill, who, for the value and extent of his writings, will be considered by future generations as one of the fathers of the church. His natural and acquired abilities were very considerable. He possessed a clear and solid judgment, and an uncommonly retentive memory. In point of application and industry, he had scarcely his equal. It has been remarked, that great scholars are but seldom formed for social intercourse. This was very much the case with Dr. Gill, whose recluse manner of life

make him appear to but little advantage in conversation with his friends. His reputation, however, was very extensive; and he enjoyed the correspondence and esteem of many learned and excellent persons. His religious principles were strictly Calvinistical, and he maintained them with firmness and ability. In one point he differed from most of his brethren. It was not his practice to address unconverted sinners, nor to enforce the invitations of the gospel. This arose out of the view which he took of the divine decrees; upon which point he was in opposition to Dr. Crisp.*

(* In 1755 Dr. Gill had republished the works of Dr. Crisp, which had at the beginning of the century given rise to so much contention, especially among the Presbyterian and Independent ministers. To the first volume he prefixed some memoirs of the Doctor's life, and added explanatory notes, with a view to defend Dr. Crisp from the charge of Antinomianism. It is very true that Dr. Crisp did not maintain the *distinctive* principle of Antinomians, viz. *that the moral law of God is not a rule of life to a believer*; because he has expressly asserted, when writing of Christ's *mystical* members, _The law continues till the whole body of Christ be made complete, by an actual subsistence of every member in him. Now this seed will not be wholly complete till the consummation of all things. But in respect of the rules of righteousness, or the matter of obedience, we are under the law still, or else we are lawless, to live every man as seems good in his own eyes, which I know no *true Christian* dares so much as think._ This proves probably that Dr. Crisp thought holiness of heart and life essential to the Christian character, and a necessary evidence of being united to Christ; but then it does not follow but that those of his hearers and readers who were *not true Christians*, whose *hearts were carnal, and at enmity against God, not subject to the law of God*, would very naturally conclude from his statements respecting the eternal union with Christ having actually transferred the sins of the elect to Christ and the righteousness of Christ to the elect, even while they were dead in sins and unbelievers; that the work of the Holy Spirit in regeneration and sanctification was unnecessary; and, therefore, that personal holiness, consisting in supreme love to God, and obedience to the law of God, were not essential to salvation. There can be no doubt, (at least, so the writer thinks,) but what those who sow the seed of the actual justification of the elect before faith, or from eternity, will have to reap a crop of Antinomian practices in the lives of their hearers. Even the correct statements of Dr. Gill upon this subject, it should seem, did not prevent some of his members from _denying the necessity of the internal work of the Spirit as a sanctifying principle of grace and holiness._ The writer regrets that Dr. Gill should have sweetened a poisonous drug, or put his indorsement to a bad bill, by explaining and recommending the works of Dr. Crisp.)

In his method of explaining some doctrines of the gospel, he was usually considered a Supra-lapsarian, and was by some termed an Antinomian. *

(* The Doctor was charged by Dr. Taylor, in an address published to students in divinity, about 1736, with denying the *necessity of good works in order to*

salvation; a position which Dr. Taylor thought deducible from the sentiments of Dr. Gill respecting eternal actual justification. This Dr. Gill thought to be slanderous, and he replied with great warmth, denying the correctness of the inference, and maintaining what he had formerly asserted, that good works were not necessary as the *causes* of salvation, and that they were not necessary as *means* of *procuring*, or of *supplying* salvation; but that, on the account of God who had commanded them, and on account of ourselves as the evidence of the genuineness of faith, and of the certainty of our election and vocation; and on the account of our neighbours, and on the enemies of religion; these he considered the *necessary* uses for which believers are *to maintain* good works. _But_, said he, _I have chosen to suffer reproach, the loss of good name and reputation,–to forego popularity, wealth, and friends,–yea, to be traduced as an Antinomian, rather than to drop or conceal any one branch of truth respecting Christ and his grace._

On one occasion, when Dr. Gill was preaching on the kingly office of Christ, as since published in that excellent work, his *Body of Divinity*, the doctor levelled some shafts with great severity at the Antinomian scheme. A gentleman from the country, who was present, was afterwards asked by a member of the church, his acquaintance,– _Well, sir, what do you think of our Doctor today?_ He replied, _You must not be offended with me, but I assure you, if I had not been told it was the great Dr. Gill who preached, I should have said I had heard an Arminian._ So little dependence is to be placed upon the opinions of different hearers of the same minister, and respecting the same sermon.)

It is certain, however, that he constantly denied the unfavourable consequences which some were disposed to draw from his reasonings, and always maintained the necessity of good works to the real Christian._

Though the labours of Dr. Gill were protracted during the space of more than half a century, yet the church does not appear to have been much increased. *

(* It is said that during the two last years of his life, he was not able, except very seldom, to preach more than once a day. The congregation declined; the young people joined other congregations. The church, after mature consideration, resolved to propose to the Doctor, whether it might not be desirable to procure him constant assistance in his ministerial work. It appears to the writer, that the answer of this great man, April 29, 1771, proves him to have been either in his dotage, or under the influence of improper selfishness. It contained the following written sentiments: _That Christ gives *pastors* to churches is certain, but that he gives *co-pastors* is not so certain. A co-pastor is an officer the Scripture is entirely silent about, and which is much the same thing as if a woman should marry another man, while she is under the law, dominion, and power of her former husband. The instance of Timothy serving with the apostle Paul, as a son with the father, is not the case; for they were neither of them pastors of particular churches, much less co-pastors. The one was an apostle, the other an evangelist, and both extraordinary ministers: the one accompanied the

other in his travels into different countries, and was sent by him into different parts, but stayed not long in any place._ And to his family and friends, to whom Dr. Rippon says he freely unbosomed himself, he said, _I should not like a co-pastor to hang about my neck, nor an assistant to be dangling at my heels!_ Surely this aged pastor must have forgotten that Christ gave, for the edification of his body the church, not only *pastors*, but *teachers*; that the church at Philippi had *bishops* as well as *deacons*. If indeed he could have produced a command from the Lord Jesus against it, as it would be easy to do against a woman marrying again while her husband had been living, it would have been decisive! From the spirit of Paul to serve the churches for their spiritual good, *by enduring all things for the elect_s sake*, it is evident that had he been settled with one church, he would not have objected to Timothy _hanging about his neck,_ _serving as a son with a father,_ nor have considered his zeal to serve the church as a thorn or a briar _dangling about his heels!_)

While under the fostering care of Mr. Benjamin Keach, other churches, like young scions, grew out of its roots; *As a spreading vine planted by the rivers of waters, it sent forth its boughs to the sea, and its branches to the rivers*: but at the death of Dr. Gill, they were less numerous by far than when Mr. Keach preached among them. As a proof of this, the new meeting-house was built upon a smaller scale than the former; and in 1653, twenty years before the doctor_s decease, there were but about one hundred and fifty members; and these were reduced, before his removal, by the young people leaving them, and uniting with other churches, to the weakening of the denomination. Only three ministers were raised up in the church during that long period, a proof of the declining zeal of its members. One of these was a Mr. Henry Scoffield, called to the ministry in the year 1749. It was indeed preserved a respectable community: it belonged to the Baptist fund, and contributed liberally towards the assistance of poorer churches. It still continues one of our most respectable churches, having been very much increased by the affectionate and evangelical ministry of Dr. Gill_s successor, the Rev. Dr. John Rippon, who still survives, and, though aged, is in the full vigour of his youthful ardour. The following epitaph was placed on Dr. Gill_s tomb.

IN HOC CAEMETERIO

CONDVNTUR RELIQVLE

IOANNIS FILL S.T.P.VIRI VITAE INTEGR

DISCIPVLI IESV INGENVI

PRAECONIS EVANGELII INSIGNIS

DEFENSORIS FIDEI CHRISTIANAE STRENV

QVI

INGENIO ERVDITIONE PIETATE ORNATVS

LABORIBVSQVE PERMAGNIS SEMPER INVICTVS.

ANNOS SVpra QVINQVQAGINTA

DOMINI MANDATA FACESSERE

HOMINVM SALVTEM ASSEQVI

FERVORE PERPETVO ARDENTE

CONTENDIT.

IN CHRISTO PLACIDE OBDORMIVIT

PRIDIE ID. OCTOBRIS A.D. MDCCLXXI.

AETATIS SVAE LXXIV.

TRANSLATION.

In this sepulchre

Are deposited the remains

Of JOHN GILL,

Professor of Sacred theology;

A man of unblemished reputation,

A sincere disciple of Jesus,

An excellent preacher of the gospel,

A courageous defender of the Christian faith; Who,

Adorned with piety, learning and skill,

Was unwearied in works of prodigious labour,

For more than fifty years.

To obey the commands of his great Master,

To advance the interests of the church,

To promote the salvation of men,
Impelled with unabated ardour,
He put forth all his strength.
He placidly fell asleep in Christ,
The 14th day of October,
In the year of our Lord, 1771,
In the 74th year of his age.

The following is a list of Dr. Gill_s works:–

1. Sermon on the Death of Mr. John Smith, 1724.–
2. The Urim and Thummim found with Christ, a Sermon, 1724.–
3. The ancient Mode of Baptism, &c. 1726.–
4. Defence of the Ancient Mode of Baptism, 1727.–
5. Exposition of the Song of Solomon, 1728.–
6. The Prophecies of the Old Testament respecting the Messiah, 1728.–
7. Two Sermons on the Resurrection of Christ, preached at the Lime-street Lecture, 1731.–
8. A Treatise on the Doctrine of the Trinity, 1731.–
9. Two Sermons on the Subject of Prayer, 1732.–
10. The Cause of God and Truth, 4 vols. 8vo. 1735–1738.–
11. Truth Defended, &c. 1736.–
12. Refutation of a Dialogue between a Baptist and a Churchman, 1737.–
13. The Doctrine of Grace cleared from the Charge of Licentiousness, 1737.–
14. Remarks on Dr. Samuel Chandler_s Sermon relating to the moral nature and fitness of things, 1738.–
15. Exposition of the New Testament, 3 vols. Folio, 1746, 1747, 1748.–
16. The Divine Right of Infant Baptism examined and disproved 1749. –
17. Sermon on Baptism, preached at Barbican, Nov. 2, 1750.–
18. The Argument from Apostolic Tradition, in favour of Infant-baptism, an Answer to the Rev. Micaiah Towgood, 1751.–
19. The Dissenter_s Reasons for Dissenting from the Church of England, translated also into the Welch language, 1751.–
20. The Doctrine of the final Perseverance of the Saints; an Answer to the Rev. John Wesley, 1752.–
21. Reply to Predestination, calmly considered, in reply to the same writer, 1752.–
22. Antipaedo-baptism, or Infant-sprinkling an innovation, 1753.–
23. Notes on the Sermons of Dr. Tobias Crisp, 1755.–
24. Farewell Sermon, at the Lecture in Great Eastcheap, 1756.–

25. Attendance in Places of Worship, where the Divine Name is recorded, encouraged, two sermons, 1757.–
26. Exposition of the Prophetical Books, 1757, 1758.–
27. Exposition of the books of the Old Testament, from Genesis to Solomon's Song, 1763, 1766.–
28. Strictures on David Bostwick's Defence of Infant Baptism, 1765.–
29. Infant Baptism a part and pillar of Popery, 1765.–
30. Dissertation concerning the Antiquity of the Hebrew Language, Letters, Vowel Points, and Accents, 1767.–
31. A Dissertation concerning the Sonship of Christ, 1768.–
32. A Body of Doctrinal Divinity, in 2 vols. 8vo. 1769.–
33. A Body of Practical Divinity; to which is added, A Dissertation concerning the Baptism of Jewish Proselytes, 1770.

The above list is taken from the memoir of Dr. Gill, by Dr. John Rippon, prefixed to the quarto edition of his Exposition of the Scriptures, published a few years since.

Besides these, Dr. Gill published An Essay on Funeral Sermons, Orations, and Odes, in 1728.–

A Sermon occasioned by the death of Mrs. Martha Gifford, preached at Little Wild-street, 1734.–

A Sermon on the High Wind in 1703, at the same place, 1736.–

Funeral Sermons for the Rev. Messrs. John Brine, William Anderson, and James Fall, three ministers who owed their conversion to his ministry.–

A Funeral Sermon for Rev. Samuel Wilson, of London, 1750.

Mrs. Elizabeth Gill, the wife of the doctor, died October 10, 1764, in the sixty-eighth year of her age. The good man could not appear in public after the decease of his beloved wife until the 21st of the same month, when he preached a funeral sermon from Heb. 11:16.

The only allusion to the event is in the last paragraph:– _What has been said may serve to wean us from this world, and draw off our hearts from it, and all things in it; since this is not our rest, our house, our home, our native place; that is in another country: and this may be of use to quicken our desire after another world, to seek a better country, and look for it; and this may also point out the happiness of those who are gone before us; they are in this better country and are in better company. But I forbear saying any more._

Subjoined to the sermon is a note. _The following character was wrote by the Doctor, and found among his papers, though not delivered from the pulpit.– _It pleased God to call her by his grace in the early time of life, and in a place of great darkness and ignorance, when there were scarce any or few professors of religion; so that when she took up a profession of it, she appeared very singular, and became the object of the scoffs and jeers of her neighbours and former acquaintances; but this did not deter her from pursuing the good ways of God she had entered into, and from persisting in them. She soon drank in the doctrines of the free grace of God in the salvation of men by Christ, of which she had a comfortable experience.

_In the after time of her life her afflictions and troubles were many; but under all she was favoured with Divine supports, and was frequently indulged with gracious words of promise on different occasions, and yet after doubting and fearing; for none could have

meaner and more humble thoughts of themselves than she always had, looking upon herself as *less than the least of all saints*.

_Lord_s days were usually delightful to her; she often met with refreshings from the presence of God in them, which made her earnestly desire the return of them; and when the day drew nigh, longing till the morning was, and the time came to attend public worship. The loss of these precious opportunities, through her long confinement, was greatly lamented by her.

_She was one that truly feared God, and was desirous of having a conscience void of offence both towards God and man, and of doing her duty to both; careful, as much as in her lay, to give no offence by word or deed, to the world or to the church of God; studying the things which make for peace among all with whom she was concerned; as her whole deportment, for the space of between forty and fifty years, has abundantly shewn, of which many here are witnesses.

_Her last affliction, though long, tedious, and painful, was borne with the greatest patience; that passage of scripture was truly verified in her, *Tribulation works patience*; and though she was not carried out, as her expression was, which she observed some were on their dying beds, in raptures of joy and strong expressions of faith, yet it pleased God to drop comfort into her soul at certain times; and sometimes she would be longing to be at home in her Father_s house, saying, _Let me go; oh, let me go to my Father_s house!_ repeating it over and over again.

_The scripture which has now been discoursed on, was expressed by her as it had been at times before, with great, pleasure and delight; and also those words, *Them that sleep in Jesus will God bring with him*. In a view of her own soul affairs, and those of her family, those words appeared to be of considerable use, and were quiet and comfortable to her, *Casting all your care upon him, for he careth for you*.

_But a few Lord_s-days ago, as her surviving relative was taking his leave of her, coming hither to preach, she expressed the following words with strong application to herself, *Having made peace through the blood of his cross*; and with the greatest vehemency and eagerness added, _And for me, too,_ and repeated it, _And for me, too._

_One morning, being asked how she did, she declared she had had much comfort that night, in her meditations on the sufferings of Christ for her, in comparison of which her afflictions, though heavy, were but light. At another time, those words were very staying, supporting, and satisfying to her, *Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure*; and very often declared she had comfort, but had not strength to express it; and indeed the enemy of souls was kept off from her through the whole; and was not suffered, as far as could be discerned, to disturb and distress her in the least. _The last words of any moment that were heard from her, were, when asked whether she had any comfort, she said she had, but not always alike; and added, *The covenant is sure*: quickly after this she grew delirious, and slept much, till death seized her; of which she seemed to be sensible by the motions of lifting up her hands, and by the words she uttered, which were _Lord! Lord!_ when something followed not understood by those that stood by; and then drawing her breath quicker, immediately, without a sigh or groan, fell asleep in the arms of Jesus._

It is evident that the Doctor_s feelings would not permit him to read this account of Mrs. Gill. A similar instance occurred when he preached a sermon for a beloved daughter, June 4, 1738. She died at the age of twelve years, May 30_ and appended to the funeral

sermon, founded upon 1 Thess.4:13, 14, is *_An Account of some choice Experiences, &c.*

In the account of this child is a paragraph which is selected for the information of those who think that the Baptists consider baptism as essential to salvation. The child had told her father, when on her death-bed, how often she had thought how delightful it would be to be baptized and partake of the Lord's Supper with the saints and people of God.

*_Being somewhat fearful, says Gill, _lest she should then labour under any discouragements, because she had not been baptized, nor had partook of the Lord's Supper, I told her, that though these are ordinances of Christ, and ought to be complied with, and submitted to by all that believe in Christ, who are proper subjects of them, and are satisfied of their right to them, as they have health and opportunity, yet *salvation does not depend upon them; persons may be saved without them, through the grace of Christ, who have not an opportunity of submitting to them,*_ **

(* Sermon xxiv. vol. i. p. 407.)

Among the friends of Dr. Gill, and in the church under his care, was an eminent christian, Mr. Edward Ludlow. His funeral sermon, from 2 Thess. 4:16, was preached January 1, 1749, and is numbered xxvii. vol. i. p. 444. One extract will be sufficient to describe his character— *_The frame of his soul was generally spiritual and heavenly, and so habituated he was to spiritual things, and so much given to the contemplation of them, and meditation upon them, that in the midst of worldly business, and even upon the Exchange, when he met with a proper person, would at once enter into a christian conversation about such things which lay warm upon his heart, which he had been lately hearing or meditating upon, which shows the bias and bent of his mind._ Dr. Gill calls him a solid saint! _If I may, said he to Dr. Gill, upon his death-bed, _but go out of the world with *a good hope through grace*, it will be more to me than all the exultations and joys some persons speak of: that is enough, I am content._*

There was a Mr. John Davenport, a deacon of this church, for whom Dr. Gill preached and published a funeral sermon, October 15, 1754, from Job 33:24. Speaking of his character the Doctor says, *_It pleased God to call him by his grace and to reveal his Son in him, in his younger days; and as he knew it was his duty with *the mouth to make confession unto salvation*, as well as with *the heart to believe unto righteousness*, he very early gave himself up to this church of Jesus Christ, of which he was a member upwards of twenty-six years; and allowing for the common infirmities of life, his conversation, so far as known by us, was agreeable to the profession he made. I doubt not but he had that true faith which works by love to Christ and to his people; a crucified Christ was precious to him; his blood, and righteousness, and all that belongs to him; he loved him, his people, his gospel, and his ordinances: he was an humble Christian, tender and compassionate to the poor, to whom he behaved very respectfully both by words and deeds: he had a very mean opinion of himself, being very sensible of the corruption of his nature, and the plague of his heart, and of his deficiencies and imperfections in life: to this was owing the great reluctance with which he accepted the office of a deacon, as many of you well know, and for the same reason chose to officiate in it only when pure necessity obliged him to it. In a visit to him, in his late illness, which issued in death, he told me he had some delightful views of eternal things, and of his interest in them; and added, he should be very ungrateful if he did not believe that Christ shed his blood for him: that passage of Scripture being mentioned in conversation, *Oh Israel thou hast**

destroyed thyself, but in me is thine help; he observed that these words had been of wonderful use to him at a certain time, and had yielded him abundance of spiritual consolation and strength; as indeed, in a few words are expressed the destruction and salvation, the ruin and recovery of man. And though his disorder increasing rendered him afterwards very little conversible, yet, by broken expressions and various tokens and circumstances, he was judged to die comfortably; and no doubt has fallen asleep in Jesus, and is one of those that he will bring with him._

Mr. Davenport was one of the messengers from the church to the Baptist Fund. He left a family whom, at the close of sermon, Dr. Gill thus addressed:—_May you, his children that survive him, tread in his steps, and imitate him, in every thing praise-worthy, civil, moral, and religious; attend the means of grace, and may the Lord call you by it, in due time, that you may fear and serve your father_s God, and fill up his place in the world and in the church._

This address presents a fair specimen of the way in which this eminently good man preached the gospel to the unconverted. Here are no alarming appeals to the conscience, as when our Lord said, *Except ye repent ye shall perish*. Here are no expostulations to urge them to serious consideration of the danger of sin, and unbelief, as when Paul declared, *For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, &c.—knowing therefore the terrors of the Lord we persuade men;—no beseeching them in Christ_s stead, to be reconciled to God*, from the consideration of the sufficiency of the atonement and righteousness of Christ for the salvation and justification of all who believe in the name of Jesus—no warnings of the awful doom of those who in addition to being ignorant of God, refused to obey the gospel of Jesus Christ:—no exhortation to *flee from the wrath to come*, by flying for refuge to lay hold of the hope set before them:—no direction to pray for pardon, for grace, and mercy, through the mediation of Jesus; but they are merely told in reference to seeking their eternal salvation, _Attend the means of grace, and may the Lord call you by it in due time._ Is this preaching Christ *the hope of glory*, as Paul did? *warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom; that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus: whereunto I also labour, striving according to his power which worketh in me mightily?* Col. 1:28, 29.

VOLUME III.

BOOK. II.

1695: Church at Maze-pond.

CHURCH AT MAZE-POND.

MAZE-POND, and the surrounding neighbourhood, were, in former time, occupied by a palace belonging to the Abbots of Battle. It was their city mansion to which they used to resort when they attended their duty in Parliament. These Abbots maintained a bridge called _Battle Bridge,_ lying over a water-course that passed through their grounds into the river Thames. The name is still preserved in Battle-stairs. The several streets since raised upon this estate, which bear the name of the Mazes, or Maeses, were so called

from the luxuriant windings and intricacies in the magnificent gardens of those mitred priests and destructive locusts.

Several Baptist congregations existed at this part of South-wark at an early period of our history. There was a meeting-house at the _New Way in the Maze,_ which is mentioned in Maitland_s History of London, in 1738, as a Baptist place. A Mr. Warburton, who preached near Tooley-street, in 1695, was probably at this place. He was living in September, 1708: and in 1711, there was a Mr. Warren who had succeeded him.

The church now known as the Maze-pond church, assembled originally in an old wooden building in Flower-de-luce-court.

The people had separated from the church in Goat-street, under the care of Mr. Benjamin Keach, on account of singing the praises of God in public worship: the particulars of this affair have been given in our work, vol. ii. p. 431.

1702: Mr. Edward Wallin.

It is supposed that Mr. Samuel Mee, their first pastor, died about 1702, and that he was succeeded by that eminently useful minister MR. EDWARD WALLIN. He was about twenty-five years of age when he became the pastor of the church, and served it faithfully, and with considerable success, during a period of nearly thirty years. He had the honour of having descended from parents, who, in the persecuting times before the Revolution, took joyfully the spoiling of their goods for the cause of Christ. The losses to which they had been subject on account of their religious profession by fines and imprisonment, prevented them from giving their son, who soon evinced considerable genius, that learning which his capacity demanded. The religious instructions which he received from his godly parents were the means, through a divine blessing, of leading him in early life to put on the Lord Jesus Christ by baptism.

Having united himself to a church of Christ, and being desirous if it should appear to be the Lord_s will, to engage in the work of the ministry, he set himself indefatigably to study the Scriptures, and the oriental languages; whereby it was discovered that he aspired at an higher employment than trade, for which he was designed by his parents, and in which he was engaged.

When he began preaching the gospel, is not known, but that he engaged in it, with disinterested views, and not from mean, mercenary, or worldly considerations, is very evident from the circumstance that two congregations having given him a call at the same time, he chose to accept that of the poorer and the meaner congregation, because he believed it to be the will of God concerning him, and that his work lay there; and this notwithstanding he had at the time a young and increasing family, and was under very pressing necessities.

At the time he settled at Maze-pond the church was in a low estate as to numbers, and its circumstances were very discouraging. Not being able to procure Mr. Wallin a sufficient

support, he attended laboriously to the care of a school to provide for his family, which was often in great straits; but the Lord was pleased to appear for them in an uncommon manner. _How often,_ says Dr. Gill, _have I, with others of my brethren here present, heard him relate, with the utmost pleasure and gratitude of mind, the instances of providential goodness to him, with a single view to glorify God, and to encourage the faith and hope of others in him._

It is recorded also, to the honour of Mr. Wallin, that _though he had temptations thrown in his way to leave his small flock, he bravely resisted them, and cheerfully continued in his oversight of it._

As it might be expected, so we are informed that the blessing of God attended his faithful labours, and that his success in the ministry was very great, in the conversion of sinners, and the edification of saints. In the funeral sermon preached for him, by Dr. Gill, he says, _There needs no further proof and demonstration of this, than the bare consideration of the low estate in which this church was when he came among you, and the very flourishing state in which he has now left you._

It is mentioned, to the honour of this worthy minister, that his large acquaintance with men and things, together with a great sagacity and penetration, joined with labour in which he took pleasure, gave him an uncommon turn for business. The following exclamation from such an honest great man as Dr. Gill, is one of the highest eulogies which could have been pronounced upon the useful character of Mr. Wallin;_How many will miss him for his private advice and counsels! What a loss will the churches in city and country sustain, who had a common share in his care and affection! And how long has he been a father and a guide to you, my brethren, and myself! Have we not reason to cry, as the prophet did, *My father, my father, the chariot of Israel, and the horsemen thereof!*

1702 33: Mr. Edward Wallin.

Whilst, however, Mr. Wallin manifested great concern for the public good of the churches of Christ in general, he did not neglect to manifest affectionate regard to the church under his pastoral care. This, of all the branches of the Redeemer_s interest, lay nearest his heart; and here he spent his time, his talents, and his strength. This was especially manifested at some periods of trial and difficulty which he had experienced in connection with the church. In a manuscript found after his death, these sentiments were expressed;_Oh! That my present tears might cement the hearts of my dear members together in love, and that there might be no other contention among them, than what might express their self-denial for the sake of Christ, and as fellow-members striving together for the faith of the gospel, but not with one another about different sentiments in matters not essential to true religion, or to the public worship of God under the gospel. *

(* Doubtless referring to the subject of singing in public.)

Oh! Imitate a dear Redeemer in this self-denying, loving, and tender spirit and carriage one towards another: this will produce peace in the church; this will yield peace in your own souls; this will yield a comfortable reflection in the near views of death and an eternal world._

It appears that he had been exercised with many afflictive providences, and had always manifested great resignation to the divine will. His last illness was for several months; and when he was first seized, considering that he had received _the sentence of death,_ he wrote the following sentiments in his diary: __And now, methinks, I am ready to yield up my soul into the hands of a dear Jesus, in whom alone I have hope, and with whom I long to be. I have been a wonderful instance of his grace, and indeed of sovereign goodness, in that he should put such an one as I into the ministry, and uphold me so long in it, to some usefulness to poor souls, whom I hope to meet in the great day with exceeding joy._

The following statement by Dr. Gill will be read with interest, as it affords proof, that *the end of the upright man is peace!*

_During his long indisposition he was very comfortable in his soul, and satisfied about his eternal state. In my last visit to him, that he was able in any tolerable manner, with any degree of strength to converse with me, I asked him whether his faith in Christ was now steady; he replied, _steady, steady on the person of Christ, and those glorious truths of the gospel, which have been the support of my soul, and the delight of my ministry,_ One of the last things he was heard to say before his death was, that the present dispensation was the most delightful one he ever yet was under; which shews, that he must have had supports, and large discoveries of love in his last moments. And thus he sweetly fell asleep in Jesus, and now makes one of the shining crowd which stand before the throne, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands. May we be able to make a right use of this melancholy providence: should not the removal of such able and faithful servants of Christ send us to the throne of grace, to pray the Lord of the harvest, that he would send forth labourers into his harvest, that his churches may be supplied, and his interest preserved?

In describing the character of Mr. Wallin, Dr. Gill says, _His indefatigableness was very considerable, as appears from the progress he made in some of the learned languages, and in other parts of useful knowledge, which recommended him to the pulpit, and the press, and to every branch of conversation.

1733: Mr. Edward Wallin.

_His ministerial endowments and qualifications were such, as are rare in this present age. Besides a large experience of the grace of God, he had a considerable share of light and knowledge in the great truths of the gospel, he had an heavenly skill to lay open the wretched and miserable state and condition of sinners by nature, and to set forth the glory of Christ in his person, blood, righteousness, and sacrifice. His language was plain and easy, though strong and masculine, far above contempt, and yet free from the swelling

words of vain rhetoricians. His reasoning was clear and nervous, his mien and deportment were grave, his address was with majesty, which at once had a tendency to command awe, engage the attention, and strike the affection. And, let me not forget to take notice of his excellent talent in prayer, and of that sweet and near communion he often enjoyed with God in the discharge of that work in private.

_His conversation with men was free and pleasant, affable and courteous, instructive and diverting, which made him universally esteemed and beloved.

_Notwithstanding all his attainments, gifts, and usefulness, he was humble, and entertained mean and low thoughts of himself; this might be seen in his carriage to those who were inferior to him. In a manuscript written by himself, I meet with some lines, breathing out his sense of divine grace and his own unworthiness: _Oh! Says he, how unworthy have I always been of such dear favours with which I have been indulge. I can say, in the views of many infirmities, I have obtained mercy of the Lord to be faithful in the ministry to the best of my light. Oh! That I had but more light, and liberty, in my Lord_s work, in every respect. Alas! how short have I come of filling up the character I have unworthily bore in the churches._ _

Mr. Wallin died June 12, 1733, in the fifty-fifth year of his age. He published two sermons only, one on the death of the Rev. John Noble, the other on the death of Mrs. Mary Weare. His last, a second edition of which was published, was dedicated _To Mrs. Catherine Jocelyn, daughter of Sir Strange Jocelyn, Bart. of Hyde-hall, in the Country of Hertford, (who with others hath occasioned this publication,) this plain discourse is humbly offered by, Madam, your sincere friend and servant, Edward Wallin._ The text is Isa. 54:5;_ *For thy Maker is thy husband, &c.*

It is pleasing to perceive another proof of _love and unity among Calvinists differing in opinion from each other._ In preaching a funeral sermon for Mr. Wallin, and speaking in such high terms of his character and usefulness, Dr. Gill has set an example that it would be lovely and of good report if some of his disciples would imitate. Mr. Crosby, who well knew Mr. Wallin, and the superior eminence of his character, was much offended at a phrase used by Dr. Gill, viz. that _he had a considerable share of light and knowledge in the great things of the gospel._ Mr. Crosby says, _But why does Mr. Gill allow him but a *considerable share* of light and knowledge in the great truths of the gospel? It is true, he was a man of great moderation, though of them who profess the Calvinist scheme of religion, and did not run into those flights of justification before faith, and of good words in no sense being necessary to salvation; but with the English Baptists in general, held that none can be said to be actually reconciled, justified, or adopted, until they are really implanted into Jesus Christ by faith; and accordingly, in his discourses, did well distinguish betwixt justification and sanctification, exalting the imputed righteousness of Christ without undervaluing the work of the Spirit. Neither do I know, though I was intimately acquainted with him many years, that he ever, publicly or privately, boasted of his learning or knowledge; a thing indeed frequently practised by such as have but a considerable or little share of them; and therefore I must take the liberty, as well as many

others, to dissent from Mr. Gill on this head, and believe Mr. Wallin to have been endued with a *large* share of knowledge in the great things of the gospel._

There is probably a portion of asperity running through the above remarks; but they are introduced to shew that Dr. Gill thought it no reason for despising Mr. Wallin, because he did not believe in the doctrine of eternal actual justification before faith; while the statement of Mr. Crosby goes to prove, that the great body of English Baptists had never been of that opinion till it was introduced and maintained by Messrs. Skepp and Brine, and Dr. Gill.

During Mr. Wallin_s ministry, the meeting-house in Maze-pond was built, and opened a few years before his death. It is a good building, and has a large burying-ground behind it, where great numbers of persons of the Baptist denomination in Southwark have been interred. In that place Mr. Wallin was buried; where, upon a stone against the wall of the meeting-house, is this inscription: _

In this vault are deposited
The remains of
The Reverend Mr. EDWARD WALLIN,

Who departed this life

June the 12th, 1733, aged 55.

His singular natural accomplishments,

Joined to a personal acquaintance with mankind,

Were greatly improved

By his experience as a Christian,

And his abilities as a divine,

So that

When we consider the vivacity of his wit,

The penetration of his judgment,

The compass of his knowledge,

The force of his reasoning,

And the facility of his address,

It is doubtful whether he was more to be admired

In civil or religious life.

His conversation was pleasant and instructive.

His advice generous and faithful,

His sermon judicious and affectionate;

He was a great blessing to the church

Of which he was pastor,

A father to several in the ministry,

Who grew up under his influence,

And an happy instrument of the glory of God,

Both in the city and the country.

In this vault are also interred

The remains of

MRS. SARAH WALLIN,

Wife of Mr. BENJAMIN WALLIN,

Who departed this life Feb. 29, 1752,

In the 42nd year of her age.

And likewise Five of their Children.

1733: Mr. Sayer Rhudd.

There were three ministers who rendered occasional assistance to Mr. Wallin; these were Messrs. Samuel Ring, John Townsend, and Aaron Spurrier.

Mr. Wallin is said to have been _a father to several in the ministry._ Mr. Samuel Wilson was called to the ministry by the church about 1724, and Mr. Sayer Rhudd in 1725.

Mr. Wallin was a member of the Society at the Coffee-house from 1723 until his death. His removal was greatly lamented by them, and was one of those removals of worthy and

able ministers which led to an extraordinary meeting of prayer of the associated churches at Devonshire-square meeting, May 24, 1734.

The church belonged to the Baptist Fund from its commencement, and has been very liberal in its contributions towards it. There is an engraving of Mr. Wallin by Wynde, mentioned by Noble; a copy of this is in the possession of Mr. Benjamin Coxhead.

After the death of Mr. Wallin, Mr. SAYER RHUDD, a Doctor of Medicine, was invited to preach there with a view to succeed in the pastoral office. He had been formerly a member of the church, and had been called to the ministry by them. He first settled as a minister at Glass-house-street, Westminster, and removing from thence in 1725, he took the charge of a congregation at Turners_-hall, in Philpot-lane. He afterwards, with the people of that place, united with the church in Devonshire-square in 1727; as has been already stated. While he was delivering his probationary sermons at Maze-pond, the people suspecting the soundness of his principles, requested him to preach on the doctrine of the Trinity. Mr. Rhudd very frankly delivered his sentiments in a sermon from 1 Tim. 2:5; *There is one God, and one Mediator*, &c. In this sermon he avowed some opinions from which the people discovered that his sentiments were unsound on that fundamental doctrine, and he was accordingly rejected on account of Unitarian sentiments. A few of the people, however, adhered to him, and amongst the rest a Mrs. Ginn, who enabled Mr. Rhudd to erect a new place in Snow_s-fields. We shall have occasion to notice Mr. Rhudd again.

1734: Mr. Abraham West.

Mr. ABRAHAM WEST was the next pastor of the church. This young minister was a member of the church in Little Wild-street during the time of Dr. Gifford; and was called to exercise his gifts with a view to the ministry in May 1734. Having been heard with great approbation, the church resolved, July 14, 1734, _that he be authorized to preach whenever the providence of God shall call and give him an opportunity._

In the October following, it was proposed to consider whether he should be invited to assist Mr. Gifford in that church; and at a subsequent church meeting, Nov. 17, 1734, the pastor declared _he was willing to commit the affair relating to brother West to the conduct and determination of the church, in order to give the best proof he can of his sincerity, and of his having no sinister end in view._ The affair was to have been debated on that day three weeks, and the whole church was to have notice given them respecting it. At that meeting, Dec. 8, 1734, the decision was, _that brother West be not chosen as an assistant for one part of the Lord_s day._

It is probable he, from this time, supplied the church in Maze-pond, as it appears from a minute entered in the records of Little Wild-street, May 1, 1735. _A. Gifford, chairman:_ Three messengers from Mr. Wallin_s church, acquainted the church with brother West_s desire to be dismissed to that church; and brother West also in person acquainting the church that they spoke his mind, it was agreed that he be dismissed accordingly._

Mr. West was ordained at Maze-pond, sometime in 1736. In the acceptance of this office, he made it a condition that singing should be introduced into public worship. He was a very promising minister, but as *he came up*, so he was *cut down like a flower*. He died March 27, 1739, aged 27 years. A plain flat stone, behind the meeting-house, has the following short inscription.

In memory

Of Mr. ABRAHAM WEST,

Pastor of this Church,

Who departed this life

March 27th, 1739.

Aged 27 years.

In the account read by Mr. Benjamin Wallin at his own ordination over this church, speaking of the death of his father, the Rev. Edward Wallin, Mr. West is thus very respectfully noticed. _We went on for some time in a very declining way, one stake being pulled up after another, till we were led to the choice of our late honoured pastor, Mr. Abraham West; through whom a beam of light seemed to break forth upon us in a promising manner; but our forward hopes were nipped in the bud: this ray soon crept under a cloud, which was followed by the removal of our dear friend into a land of darkness._

I find that Mr. West was introduced to the Society at the Coffee-house, July, 16, 1734, by Dr. Gifford, immediately after he had received the call of the church. His name was returned as a minister of the general body of Dissenting ministers, Feb. 28, 1737_8. He does not appear to have attended with the ministers after this. I know nothing more of him, excepting from one line in Mr. Benjamin Wallin's funeral sermon, in which Dr. Samuel Stennett calls Mr. Abraham West, _ a promising young person._

1711 39: Mr. Benjamin Wallin.

The church was not long destitute, as they found in the son of their former pastor, Mr. Edward Wallin, an acceptable and judicious minister. Mr. BENJAMIN WALLIN was born in London, in the year 1711, and from an accident which happened to him while an infant at nurse, an incurable lameness was contracted; but at fourteen years of age, through the skill of Mr. Jonas Thoroughgood, a Baptist minister in Herefordshire, he was so far recovered as to be able to walk in a much more comfortable manner than before. Though this youth was trained up in the way he should go, and as he states, had the advantage of hearing the word of God from his infancy, under the ministry of his excellent father; yet he adds, _under his judicious and affectionate instructions, both as a

parent and a minister, I continued a longtime a melancholy instance of the insufficiency of the best of means without a special blessing: but I trust before his merciful removal, it pleased God, who is rich in mercy, to open the eyes of my understanding, and to change what was before only the form to the power of godliness.*

(* Dedication to his *_Christian Life,_* &c. 1746.)

Mr. Wallin received the rudiments of a good education, under the Rev. John Needham of Hitchin, and was afterwards under considerable obligations to Dr. Sayer Rhudd, and more especially to that eminently evangelical minister, Dr. Joseph Stennett, from whose instructions and counsels he received much useful knowledge, which insensibly prepared him for an office, which, at that itme, he had no intention or prospect of filling, a station in the Chruch of God.

Mr. Wallin waas baptized by his honoured father, and joined the church in Maze-pond. Alluding to this, he says, in his address to the church, *_* I made a free choice of you, as the temple where I would pay my vows, and offer up the sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving, as well as seek my future spiritual improvement.*_* *

(* Dedication to his *_Christian Life,_* &c. 1746.)

When Mr. Wallin was in his twenty-first year, about 1732, and whilst he was an apprentice, the year before his father_s death, some of the members of the church proposed that he should be encouraged to exercise his gifts for the work of the ministry, but, on account of some interposing difficulties, the design was abandoned until several years afterwards.

Mr. Wallin having no thought of entering upon the ministry, engaged in business, and entered into the marriage relation. Still there were those among his friends, who thought he ought not to abandon the design. In May 1734, two deacons, Mr. John Manypenny and Mr. John Williams, conversed with him seriously on the subject. They informed him that, in their opinion, he had a gift for public usefulness, and that he had acknowledged a church of Christ had power to make trial of those they considered as having promising gifts; and therefore it was their firm intention to propose to the church in Maze-pond, to call him to speak before them. As, however, they would not proceed to that measure without Mr. Wallin_s consent, and he having in a respectful, serious, and sensible manner, offered reasons why he thought he ought not to give up his business for the public ministry, the matter was again dropped.

1739: Mr. Benjamin Wallin.

On November 6, 1739, after the death of Mr. West, three deacons of the church, Messrs. George Ring, Edward Tomkins, and Thomas, Cox, acquainted Mr. Wallin, that they were appointed to inform him that the church apprehended he had a gift for public service, and that they had unanimously given him a call to exercise before them the next church meeting.

This communication was so entirely unexpected, that Mr. Wallin was quite unprepared to comply with their request: and in a letter addressed to the church, December 3, 1739, he says, _When I consider the design of such a call, which at least must be if I am approved of, to be employed more or less in preaching the gospel; the very thought strikes me with terror: to address the judgments and consciences of men, on subjects revealed from heaven of the most lasting importance to their precious and immortal souls, is a work of so awful a nature, that an inspired apostle, with all the greatest natural, acquired, and miraculous gifts, thought himself insufficient for it. It is no wonder then that one void of almost every qualification should think it presumption to touch the sacred service, _ &c.

Mr. Wallin urged also the difficulty he should have to relinquish his business, and his fears lest he should, by not providing for his own house, bring a reproach upon the gospel; he promised however, to take the matter into consideration, and thus piously concludes his letter: _I may say as the apostle in another case, *God is my record how greatly I long after* our being fixed with a sound and able minister, whose soul may yearn after us in the bowels of Jesus Christ; and through whose prayers and instructions, under the divine blessing, *our love may abound yet more and more in knowledge and in all judgment*; and that we may *approve things that are excellent, and be sincere and without offence till the day of Christ*, _

Mr. Wallin had asked the advice of Mr. (afterwards Dr.) Joseph Stennett, upon receiving the message of the church: the following letter was sent to that worthy minister, enclosing that which Mr. Wallin had prepared as an answer to the church, and from which some extracts have been already given.

This letter lays open the state of Mr. Wallin's mind, and affords evidence of the prudence of wisdom by which he governed his affairs.

To the Rev. Mr. Joseph Stennett, Sen.

Rev. Sir,

_You will readily believe the concern of my mind has been very great since I saw you last: such have been the calls of my own private business, and my public office in the parish, I have not been able to come at so much time in private together, as you recommended and I desired. But no time has past without some thought of the important affair, nor have I been without several seasons wherein I have solemnly addressed the throne of grace.

_The main point with me is, whether it is probable I can be more useful in the station proposed to me, than that in which I at present stand? So many are those qualifications, necessary to the honourable discharge of that work, which I am destitute of, and so much do the credit of religion and peace of my own conscience depend upon such a discharge of it, if I enter upon it; that the deep sense I have of my own inability and unworthiness, will not suffer me to entertain a hope sufficient to encourage me. If the Lord is descending to me in this way, *He makes the clouds his chariots*. Did I but know HIS will,

my heart deceives me if I am not ready to obey it. But so many instances of unfaithfulness have I to charge myself with in my private station, that sure I cannot think I can be *counted faithful and put into the ministry!*

_I have written something as an answer to the church_s message, in which you may see more of my thoughts: please to return it before Monday, that being the day they are to meet.

_I doubt not but I have an interest in your thoughts and prayers, and subscribe myself your unworthy relation in the best bonds,
B.W.

London, November 28, 1739_

1740: Mr. Benjamin Wallin.

The church were willing to wait, till Mr. Wallin was relieved from a public station which he filled in the parish; but before that period arrived, a sermon having been preached by Mr. Benjamin Beddome, a deacon who was unfriendly to Mr. Wallin_s being brought into pastoral office, without having even consulted his brethren in office or the church, stopped the members after the sermon, and proposed Mr. Beddome as a suitable person for the pastoral office; this however turned out to the mortification of this Diotrephes; for no one seconding the motion; the matter dropped of course.

On the business of speaking before the church being again urged upon Mr. Wallin, and there being great cause to apprehend a division if he did not comply, he again consulted his friend, Mr. Joseph Stennett. The following extract from the answer given by that worthy minister, is worthy of being preserved.

_As for your humble, broken, timorous frame, with all the circumstances which have tended to promote such a temper of mind, I apprehend it is that preparation of heart which is from the Lord. Conscience testifies for you, my brother, that you are not seeking your own things: you have the regular call of God_s people; and without a trial, how will you know whether it is the call of God or no? Take courage, dear sir, and put your trust in him, and he will, I trust, strengthen your heart and guide you in the way in which you ought to go._

Mr. Wallin accordingly exercised his gifts, by speaking before the church, on July 6, 1740. After this he felt such discouragement that he wrote to the church requesting they would not urge him to continue speaking before them. To this letter a friendly and sensible reply was returned by one of the deacons, who appears to have suspected that the principal cause why Mr. Wallin was discouraged, was the opposition which some few of the members made to him. He says, _Our brethren and sisters, in the opposition, have nothing to urge as a sufficient objection to your conduct either in the world or in the church, neither have they any just plea against your abilities: and if I may be allowed to guess the reason they act thus, it is because they would not have a lay teacher, and daub

over their true sentiments with the untempered mortar, of fear and trembling about the hurt that may accrue to your family, and the peace and prosperity of the church!_ In another letter from this worthy deacon, dated September 19, 1740, he produces a number of arguments from Scripture, and from authors, and the practice of our churches, to shew the right the church had to call a gifted brother to the pastor_s office, and still strongly urges Mr. Wallin to a compliance with their call.

Fearing to trust his own opinion, which was that he ought to decline all thoughts of the ministry, Mr. Wallin, October 30, 1740, addressed a letter to four eminent Baptist ministers, requesting their advice, and was encouraged by them to comply with the call of the church: these were the Rev. Messrs. Gill, Stennett, Wilson, and Brine.

After numerous difficulties, arising principally from mental exercises, Mr. Wallin engaged publicly in the work of preaching the gospel on Nov. 9, 1740, from 2 Cor. ii. 16. *Who is sufficient for these things?* He was afterwards invited on June 8, 1741, to preach twice a day, for a month or two, as a probationer for the pastoral office. On July 9, the church resolved to call him to the work, and at the request of Mr. Wallin, a solemn season of prayer on July 15, was held on his behalf. The ordination service was conducted in the following manner, as detailed in Mr. Wallin_s manuscripts.

1741: Mr. Benjamin Wallin.

_Thursday October 15, 1741, I was publicly and solemnly invested with the office of pastor, after the church had given the assembly an account, by brother Tomkins, of the call of the church, and the motives inducing thereunto, and I had solemnly recognized my acceptance thereof.

_Mr. Thomas Flower began in prayer. Mr. John Gill ordained. *

(* Probably by pronouncing the words of ordination similar to those mentioned at the ordination of Mr. Joseph Burroughs. See p.149.)

Mr. Dawkes proceeded immediately after ordination. Mr. Samuel Wilson gave the exhortation from 2 Cor. 2:16, Mr. Brine prayed after Mr. Wilson had finished; then Mr. Gill preached to the people from Heb.13:18; and Mr. Edmund Townsend concluded: the solemnity lasted from half past ten to three-quarters past two. N.B. Some members met to pray by eight o_clock in the morning._ *

(* Mr. Wallin has preserved among his manuscripts the following account of his being received a member of the Society of ministers:– _Memo. Friday, Nov. 18, 1740: admitted a member of the Board of Ministers. Mr. John Brine in the chair, who addressed me as follows;_Mr. Wallin, with the greatest satisfaction we hear you are called by the church to which you belong, to the important work of preaching the gospel; I am to acquaint you this Board freely admits you a member; hoping God will be with you, and succeed, you in the work to which HE called you_

_There were present, beside the Chairman,

MR. GEO. BRAITHWAITE,

MR. EDMUND TOWNSEND,

- JOSEPH STENNETT, sen.

----- TEMPLEMAN,

- JOSEPH STENNETT, jun.

- SAMUEL DEW,

- THOMAS FLOWER,

- DANIEL WHITE, and

- WILLIAM ANDERSON,

- JOHN TOWNSEND._)

- WILLIAM MORETON,

1782: Mr. Benjamin Wallin.

Mr. Wallin was enabled, notwithstanding all his fears, to fill up this important station with great respectability for upwards of forty years. In 1752 he was deprived of his wife, who was interred in the same grave with his honoured father: and on the 19th February, 1782, at the age of seventy-one years, he finished his course with joy. His funeral sermon was preached by the Rev. Dr. Samuel Stennett, from Matt. 25:23. *Enter thou into the joy of thy Lord.* This was printed with the title, _The faithful Minister rewarded._ Mr. Booth_s address at the interment is appended to the sermon. Both of these discourses were published at the request of the church.

From Dr. Stennett_s sermon the following account of Mr. Wallin_s character and labours is extracted: _

_Mr. Benjamin Wallin was the son of Mr. Edward Wallin, who was an excellent man, and for many years a worthy pastor of this church. On his decease, Mr. Abraham West, a promising young person, was chosen to that office. He dying, our dear departed friend, after the interval of about seven years from his father_s death, was invited to accept the charge. It was with no small reluctance, the effect of self-diffidence and a deep sense of the importance of the work, he complied. My dear and honoured father was the principal instrument, under God, of removing his difficulties, and of assisting him in his preparations for this service; which he often acknowledged with great affection and gratitude. And there are those yet living who can testify what serious regard he paid to the voice of God in this matter. Nor should I forget to observe here, that in his last illness he assured me, with pleasing satisfaction, that, upon the fairest examination he was capable of making into the principles and views with which he first entered on a profession of religion, and afterwards engaged in the work of the ministry, he had the sentence of his mind and conscience in his favour.

_Thus setting out in the service of his divine Master, he pursued the great objects of his ministry with faithfulness, diligence, and success. And habitual reverence he had of God upon his spirit, particularly in prayer. The voice of providence he attentively regarded in

the various incidents of his life. To the gospel of Christ, as a scheme adapted to magnify both the justice and the grace of God, and to restore men to his likeness as well as his favour, he steadily adhered. In explaining the doctrines, and recommending the institutions of primitive Christianity, he paid a very particular regard to the Scriptures, often observing how much it is the duty of ministers, like the apostles, to reason out of the word of God. So that his preaching was methodical, scriptural, and practical. He was happy, too, in accommodating his subjects to public occasion, having the great object of doing good ever in view. He laboured to get at the consciences of his hearers, to rouse the impenitent, to direct the inquiring, to comfort the distressed, to animate the slothful, and to edify the faithful. And it pleased God to succeed his labours, in not a few instances, to the great joy of his heart. Many of you, my friends, if not all, may be said to be his spiritual children. And as such he tenderly loved you. Your interests, in your individual and collective capacities, lay near his heart. He sympathized with you in your sorrows, and rejoiced with you in your joys, both on a spiritual and temporal account. Your attention to the social duties of religion, to which he earnestly pressed you, gave him no small pleasure. Never was he so happy as when presiding among you, on stated or occasional meetings of the church. And with particular satisfaction he mentioned to me, in his last illness, your having so many of you met together to offer prayer to God on his account.

_Nor were his labours for the glory of God, and the good of men, confined to this community. He was glad of every opportunity to promote the interests of other churches, and the cause of religion in general, by his counsels and occasional services. He was a man of a public spirit. And, firmly attached as he was to the doctrines of the reformation, and to that particular denomination to which he belonged, he sincerely loved all good men wherever he met with them; and gave proof of his cordial regard to the interests of religious liberty, by using his endeavours, in concert with his brethren, to promote and enlarge it. *

(* Mr. Wallin was one of the ministers who, in 1772, petitioned the legislature for relief in the matter of subscription to the articles of the Church of England.)

In short, it may be truly said of him; he was a good man, a steady friend, an experienced Christian and an able and faithful minister of the gospel. He was not indeed without his infirmities, but these were of such a kind as quickly to recede from the view of those who knew him: and they who were intimately acquainted with him will ever retain a deep sense of his great worth.

_Forty years and a few months he spent, my friends, in your service. And how holily, justly, and unblameably he lived, you know, and indeed all who knew him will testify; for he maintained to the last a character honourable in the sight of all men. During this long term he was but rarely interrupted in his work by illness. Yet afflictions he did meet with, which he patiently endured, and the sanctified use of which he evidently experienced. And, as he was often used to say, it was in his heart to live and die with you, so his wish was gratified.

__His last illness was not protracted to a very great length; and whatever pains he suffered, many comforts were mingled with them. He was surrounded with friends who tenderly felt with him in his sorrows, as he had been used to feel with them in theirs. And what was his greatest mercy of all, he enjoyed sweet composure of mind, well satisfied as to his state towards God, and that he had built his hope on the right foundation. He knew whom he had believed, and was verily persuaded that he was able to keep what he had committed to him against the great day. The faithfulness of God, in particular, he frequently spoke of, as a source whence he drew substantial consolation. His reason was continued to him very nearly to the close of life. And some of the last words he was heard to pronounce were __Oh! Pardon! _rejoicing! _I---. _Thus died this excellent man. And oh! How inconceivable must have been the pleasure his immortal spirit felt, when, as he passed the gates of the celestial city, he heard his master say, *Well done, good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord!*__

Mr. Booth_s address is characteristic of himself, and shews the great man even at that period of his life: __On such an occasion as this, it is proper that we, who bear the ministerial character, should feel, with redoubled force, our obligations to diligence in the faithful discharge of that sacred trust which is reposed in us. Our great business is, as my brethren well know, to preach the gospel of God, and to watch for the souls of men. We are bound so to preach as to commend ourselves to the enlightened and impartial conscience; and so to watch as those that must give an account of their whole conduct. To entertain and to please, are the design of an actor on the stage, not of a minister in his pulpit. Our parts and learning, our spiritual gifts and sacred office, answer the great end of the Christian ministry no further than they are means of promoting true virtue and real piety. Nor, in any other view, can the exercise of them afford peaceful reflections when we come to die. It is possible for us to gain the applause of a multitude, while the principles on which we act and the end at which we aim are detestable in the sight of God; and such as our consciences, if awake, must abhor in the near views of eternity. Of this our venerable deceased friend was well aware, as I learnt from frequent conversations with him.__

Mr. Wallin was interred in the burial-ground behind the meeting-house, and the following inscription is on his tombstone: __

Sacred to the memory

Of the

Rev. BENJAMIN WALLIN, M.A.

A man

(Human frailty abated)

Exempt from all the faults,

And endowed with all the virtues,
Of a Christian minister,
By the unanimous desire of a free people,
He succeeded his father,
EDWARD WALLIN,
As a pastor of this church
And,
By a diligent discharge of his office,
By a constant course of manly and social actions,
By a wise application of means to incidents,
for more than forty years,
rendered a large congregation happy.
In the year 1782,
On February the 19th,
In the seventy-first year of his age,
His tranquil soul departed,
Happy in itself,
At peace with God,
And all mankind.

The following is a list of Mr. Wallin_s works:_

1. The Compassions of a dying Saviour on those who crucified him, 1746._
2. The Christian Life in divers of its branches described and recommended, in four parts, with a serious Exhortation to Prayer, 1746._
3. The Redeemer_s Charge against his declining Churches, 1748._
4. An Exhortation against quenching the Spirit, 1748._
5. An humble Address to the Churches of Christ not to forsake their Assemblies, 1750._

6. Evangelical Hymns on various Views of the Christian Life, for the Closet, 1750._
7. Exhortations to Prayer and the Lord_s Supper._
8. A sermon at the Ordination of the Rev. Mr. Samuel Burford, Goodman_s-fields, 1755._
9. Sermon at the Ordination of the Rev. Mr. Walter Richards, Devonshire-square, 1762–
10. The Experience of the Saints with the Operations of the Holy Spirit explained and **defended, 1763–
11. The Christian_s Concern not to be a Cast-away; two Discourses on 1 Cor. 9:27, 1765. Cumberland, 1765.–
12. On the Decease of his Royal Highness the Duke of Cumberland, 1765–
13. The Eternal Existence of our Lord Jesus Christ considered and improved, 1766.–
14. The Christian Salutation; a Farewell Sermon, 1766.–
15. The Constitution of a Gospel Church; at the Ordination of the Rev. Mr. Reynolds, 1766.–
16. Thirty-two Lectures on Primitive Christianity, 1768–
17. The Folly of neglecting Divine Institutions, 1758.–
18. The Christian_s Duty and Confidence in times of Public Calamity, occasioned by the late dreadful Earthquakes, and the apprehensions of a French War, 1756.–
19. The joyful Sacrifice of a prosperous Nation; a Thanksgiving Sermon for Victory and Peace, 1759.–
20. Funeral Sermon on the Death of Mr. E. Tomkins, 1753.–
21. Ditto on the Death of Mr. Jonas Thorowgood, of Hertford, 1753.–
22. Ditto on the Death of Mr. T. Wildman, 1754.–
23. Ditto on the Decease of the Rev. Mr. John Author, of Waltham Abbey, 1762.–
24. A Letter to the Congregation meeting near the Maze-pond, Southwark, 1755.–
25. Charge at the Ordination of the Rev. Mr. Abraham Booth Goodman_s-field, 1768.–
26. Pious Memorial; three Sermons on the three deceased worthy Professors.–
27. Gospel Requisites to acceptable Prayer, 1770.–
28. The Importance of Family Religion, 1771–
29. Scripture Doctrine of Christ_s Sonship, 1771.–
30. At the Grave of Dr. John Gill, 1772.–
31. Funeral Sermon on Mr. Job Heath, 1773.–
32. Ditto on the Rev. Mr. Samuel James, of Hitching, 1773.–
33. Sermon on the Settling anew Church, 1774.–
34. On the Death of Miss Macgowan, 1774.–
35. Memoirs of a young Gentleman for the Warning of Deists, 1774.–
36. The popular Concern in the Choice of Representatives, 1774.–
37. Case of a fallen Professor, 1775.–
38. Discourses on the Prodigal Son, 1775.–
39. The ancient Believer_s Transition from Mortality to Life; on the Decease of Mrs. Hannah Murn.–
40. Satan rebuked and the Son defended, 1781.–
41. Sermon on the Decease of the Rev. Mr. John Macgowan.

1773: Mr. Job Heath

A deacon of excellent character in this church was Mr. Job Heath, who died Jan.24, 1773, in the fifty-second year of his age. His father, who was an honourable member of the same church, had died in an old age in the year 1757.

Mr. Benjamin Wallin published a funeral sermon for Mr. Heath, which is entitled, *‘The Blessedness of the Man whom the Lord shall find diligent in his Station,’* founded upon Matt. 24:46. In describing the character of the his esteemed friend and brother, Mr. Wallin informs us, *‘It was his happiness to be early convinced of his condition as a sinner, and above all, that he soon obtained mercy to believe; having trusted in the Lord, though but a stripling, like David, he was not ashamed; nor would he delay to list himself openly under the Captain of his salvation. This was,’* he says, *‘soon after my entrance on the pastoral office, namely, Dec.1741. After he was baptized, I conducted the youth to his place in the church, so that he was among the first-fruits of my labours in Christ.’*

Mr. Wallin speaks in terms of high commendation of his filial piety; for the circumstances of his ancient and venerable parents requiring his assistance, the first produce of the labour of his hands was applied in obedience to the first command with a promise, *–Honour thy father and thy mother*. This honour was continued and increased with his abilities to the end of their days.

Divine Providence so blessed the exercise of his talents in the occupation to which he was trained, that he soon became one of the most considerable of his calling in the metropolis; but in the midst of these prosperous days, and when about to enter on a still more advantageous situation, he was suddenly taken away by death. Prosperity, which often proves an occasion for bringing forth the pride and wantonness of the heart, was not injurious to him. *‘I never saw,’* says Mr. Wallin, *‘nor ever heard of an instance in which he exulted on account of these extraordinary advantages in life; and may I not appeal to the world for his regularity, uprightness, and diligence in business?’*

He was called to the deacon’s office in 1753, which he undertook with great humility. *‘This office he was enabled to sustain nineteen years; an example of fidelity, condescension, and kindness: his decease is therefore a very great loss to the church, to the poor more especially, to our honoured brethren who co-operated with him in the same commission, and to no one more than your sympathizing minister.’*

He was diligent in his attendance upon public worship, though his habitation was distant; nor did he neglect the meetings for discipline. The last time he was at the meeting, he was apparently in good health; but a few days’ acute illness terminated in his decease, during most part of which he was not conversible. *‘The day before his confinement,’* says Mr. Wallin, *‘having occasion to write me some lines, though in haste, and, as I apprehend, with his people about him as usual, yet among them are the following pithy and pious expressions: ‘I bless God for the continuance of your life as a minister; the Lord is owning the same to my soul, for the growth of grace, and increase of love to the brethren. I know here is no abiding place; I find no solid satisfaction short of Christ Jesus my Lord;’*

and there are times I can rejoice in finding every thing my soul stands in need of, not only for time, but eternity!_ And after dropping some other things for the encouragement of his minister, which he was frequently doing, he proceeds in these striking words; _I cannot conclude without telling you, I never saw more of the emptiness of this world, and all its delights and honours, than at this time, and count them all loss that I may win Christ._ Such was the frame of this precious man, when his unknown hour was at hand, so gracious was the Lord to us in exciting him, in this occasional manner, to communicate the habitual stretch of his soul towards Jesus and heaven, in the midst of much worldly business._ Mr. Wallin adds, _It is a great breach! A principal man is removed!_

This pious evangelical sermon is dedicated _To Mrs. Mary Heath, the relict of the deceased; to Messrs, Job, James, and Benjamin Heath, with their sister Elizabeth, his surviving children; and to the whole family and church who lament his departure._

His eldest son, Mr. Job Heath, still survives, and has been for many years a most honourable deacon of the same church.

Miss Elizabeth Heath died March 21, 1780, in the twenty-fifth year of her age. Mr. Wallin improved her death in a sermon from Job xxxiii.24, and entitled it, _Deliverance from the Wrath to Come by the Ransom Price of a Mediator._ Respecting this _amiable youth, who had been unexpectedly taken away,_ Mr. Wallin says, _The deceased was the only surviving daughter of a vigilant officer in this church, who was the first-fruit of my ministry among you. It was her mercy to be early led into the knowledge of her state as a fallen creature, and the salvation of God, it is highly probable some time before it was known to her most intimate relations and friends; partly owing to a natural reservedness, but principally to the modest low thoughts of herself visible on every occasion. Be that as it may, having fixed her hope in Christ, a sense of her duty, and a desire of glorifying her Redeemer, engaged her to a voluntary confession of his name. Upon this she joined communion in our church, in company with several other branches of a family who survive in the same fellowship, being a third generation from the beginning of its union with us in the Lord.

_During the short time of her continuance among us, which expired in less than three years, she steadfastly adhered to her profession, was constant and faithful in her place, in her deportment peaceable, and in all appearance increasing in love to the community, its ministry, and members, and also in a delight of the truth and order of the gospel. Some professing Christians are far from that pious behaviour at home which might be expected from their sacred profession and standing in the house of God; scarcely any thing to be seen or heard that savours of vital religion by those who are about them: not so the dear youth we mourn; those who were nearest her person are witnesses to her private conduct and devotion, that was habitually answerable to her character, which she bore in public: the closet and the sanctuary united in the witness they bore to her real piety and diligence in every appointed means of communion with God.

_It would be an ungrateful omission to pass over in silence the manner in which this young disciple was sustained on her dying bed. She was not a stranger to transitory glooms, and at one period more especially her pressure was very distressing: the prince of darkness seemed permitted sorely to beset her; but, strengthened by divine grace, she returned in few hours in a kind of holy triumph, saying, with some degree of transport and joy, _Now the enemy has done his worst. *The Lord is my light and my salvation: the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin.*_ From that time patience and fortitude reigned in her countenance; and though the whole of her remaining illness a serenity and courage which no other principle but that of the gospel can inspire.

_In my two last interviews with her, while she was encountering the sorrows of dying nature, I found her holding fast her Redeemer with solidity and comfort. On several accounts I could not but ardently wish it might be the pleasure of God to restore her. Among many instances of joy with which I have been indulged through the long course of my ministry, I never met with more substantial evidence of dying in faith, than what appeared in our dear departed young friend:

And we know that *blessed are the dead that die in the Lord. Boast not thyself of tomorrow, for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth.*_ *

* (This sermon was not printed, but is found among the manuscripts of Mr. Benjamin Wallin, a copy of which is in the possession of the writer.)

1767: Mr. Benjamin Tomkins.

There is in Mr. Wallin_s manuscripts a funeral sermon preached on occasion of the death of Mr. Benjamin Tomkins, who died March 4, 1767, aged 64. This worthy man, it appears joined the church November 1722, in company with his brother, Mr. Edward Tomkins, who was also highly esteemed in the church, and who died in 1753. Mr. Benjamin Tomkins was called to the deacon_s office in 1753, and filled it well. _There are many witnesses,_ says Mr. Wallin, _to his constancy and faithfulness both in a private and public capacity amongst us: the forward bloom of his profession did not, as in some melancholy instances, go off without fruit: through mercy his heart being established with grace, he set well, and became rooted and steadfast, insomuch that he maintained his original situation in Zion till the end of his days._

One instance of the excellency of Mr. Tomkins_s character is thus give:—_His reverence for the Lord_s day, and his becoming resolution not to break it, even when it was almost an universal custom in the trade to which he belonged, was highly commendable, and a just reproof on those professors who can allow themselves in a practice so unworthy the name of Christianity. It may please the Lord to try his own people in this way, for righteousness_ sake, yet he will not forsake them: but our friend lost nothing by this self-denial for the sake of his conscience; his labours were crowned with success even far

beyond many who openly and shamefully prostitute the Sabbath in pursuit of their worldly advantage._

As the life of this good man was holy and upright, so his death was happy and honourable. _Our dear friend,_ says Mr. Wallin, _after many long scenes of torture, went off without a sensible convulsion or groan, and thus slept in Jesus, and is numbered with them whom God will bring with him._ Mr. Wallin, was succeeded by the Rev. James Dore, who is still living, though he has long been laid aside from his public work: the Church is at present under the care of the Rev. James Hobby, and is in a prosperous state.

VOLUME III.

BOOK. II.

1704: Church in White-street.

CHURCH IN WHITE-STREET.

THE meeting-house at which this church assembled, was situate in Sheer_s-alley, White-street, behind St. Georges_ church. It is thought the place was built through the influence of Mr. Benjamin Keach, probably soon after the Revolution. The pastor in 1704, was Mr. Richard Parkes, who has been mentioned as united with Mr. Stinton, in raising the Maze-pond school, in 1714. The church received five pounds of Mr. Hollis_s bounty, through Mr. Stinton, 1715. Mr. Parkes was among the non-subscribing ministers at the Salters_-hall synod, in 1719. He was one of the ministers who united in the society at the Coffee-house, in 1723, and attended the meeting till June 28, 1725. He probably died soon after: he was a minister of respectability and usefulness.

1765: Church in White-street.

Mr. Joseph Harrington succeeded him, who died about 1741. After him was Mr. Russell. I find him, in July 1742, applying to the society of ministers for their advice how he might settle in an orderly way, with the people late under the care of Mr. Harrington. A meeting to consist of two messengers, and the minister of each church, was appointed to consider the request. Mr. Russell afterwards applied to be admitted a member of the society, at the Coffee-house; but it was agreed that, _all the circumstances considered, he ought not to be admitted a member of this board; and further it is the advice of this board, that he do not continue the ministry, apprehending it will not be for the honour of religion._ It was further agreed, that the church in White-street should be made acquainted with the reasons for this advice, and that they should be sent in a letter to Mr. Samuel Wilson, distiller, at Deptford, a member of the church. It should seem, however, that the church chose Mr. Russell, as he was pastor of this church in 1758, and died soon after. One of the members, a Mr. Davies, was afterwards called to fill the office of pastor; but the church being in a declining state he soon resigned, and it was dissolved about 1765. The meeting-house, after having been shut up for some time, was occupied as a brewer_s warehouse. It has long since been pulled down, and some houses been built

upon the scite, that go by the name of Wilmot's Buildings. It is said there was a burying-ground belonging to the meeting-house. Not knowing the sentiments of Mr. Parkes's successors, we cannot ascertain how far his objecting to subscribe the declaration of his faith in the doctrine of the Trinity, in 1719, contributed to the decline and dissolution of this church: if, however, an objection to declare his faith in important doctrines, at a time when those doctrines were publicly impugned, led his people to undervalue their magnitude in the gospel system, they were gradually preparing to receive a skeptical and Socinian ministry; and this would enable us to account for the dissolution of the church in White-street, as has been the case in various other places, especially amongst the Presbyterian and General Baptists, where the people have departed from the Trinitarian doctrines professed by their forefathers.

It is evident also that the church had relaxed in discipline, and were so determined to exercise the right of choosing their own minister, that, in defiance of the advice of the pastors of the associated churches, they chose as a pastor a man whom they had recommended to discontinue the public ministry. If churches will act so obstinately as to refuse all counsel, and so wickedly as to pay no regard to the honour of the gospel, they will necessarily be diminished and brought low. *Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles?* Matt.8:16.

VOLUME III.

BOOK. II.

1736: Church in Snow s-fields.

CHURCH IN SNOW_S-FIELDS.

THIS meeting-house is mentioned in Maitland's list of Baptist places. It was situate in Meeting-house Walk, Snow's fields, and had been erected in 1736, chiefly by a Mrs. Ginn, who was excluded from the church in Maze-pond, for having avowed Unitarian sentiments. Mr. Sayer Rhudd had been preaching there after his return from France, as is mentioned in the account of Maze-pond, but had been rejected both by the church, and by the society of Particular Baptists on the same account. This circumstance led Mrs. Ginn to patronize and support him as the minister of her new place. Of this erroneous pedantic man, some particulars have been already given. His pamphlets, written to vindicate his own character, furnish facts which are not to his honour. From these it appears, that, even while he was pastor of the church in Devonshire-square, he had made attempts to be admitted among the Quakers, and had held several meetings with some of the principal members of that society, for the purpose of becoming a member with them. When this project failed, he wrote a letter to Lord Chancellor King, praying for admission into the established church. In this, too, he was equally unsuccessful; and when all these plans proved abortive, he attempted to persuade the Baptists that these unprincipled attempts ought to be attributed to juvenile indiscretions, and that they should believe him when he said, that he was still sincerely attached to them and to their principles; and that

notwithstanding he had given up the doctrine of the Trinity, he was still a Particular Baptist!

1736–42: Mr. Sayer Rhudd.

His patroness, Mrs. Ginn, died about two years after, and it is highly probable that Mr. Rhudd wrote the account of this lady, in the Daily Advertiser for Thursday, June 15, 1738. It is therefore proper to introduce it.

Last Sunday departed this life, in the sixtieth year of her age, Mrs. Elizabeth Ginn, of Harrington-Butts, widow, a gentlewoman very remarkable for her strict attachment to the Christian revelation, as contained in the Scriptures, and for her pious zeal in the Baptist profession: for the sake if which, through the severity of relations in her younger years, and the blind zeal of a certain community in the latter part of her life, she met with much unreasonable and cruel treatment. Her exemplary virtue and good behaviour, as a serious upright Christian, could not screen her from the censure of those who lay more stress upon mysteries, upon speculative notions, and needless distinctions, than on the duties of rational piety. But her ill treatment served to increase and quicken her inclination to attempt promoting the liberty of private judgment and Christian charity in a better way. To that end a place of worship was erected at her own expence, and encouragement given that truth in its native purity and plainness might again be preached, and the religion of Jesus freed from obscurity and imposition.

After Mr. Rhudd had lost the hundred pounds per annum, paid him by Mrs. Ginn, he found that what he called truth in its _native purity and plainness,_ would not procure him support: and therefore, his congregation being but few in number, in 1742 he again applied for a living in the established church, and soon obtained that of Walmer, in Kent. He kept an academy in the town of Deal, where he died, May 6, 1757.

He always affixed the title of M.D. to his name, and was called Doctor Rhudd. From this circumstance, however, it does not follow that he understood medicine, any more than that those ministers who affix LL.D. to their names are acquainted with the canon or the civil law.

Judging from the story he has told of his own vacillating opinions and conduct, it appears that he was a vain conceited person. The fact that the Calvinistic ministers who had excluded him from their society, never answered his proving pamphlets, makes it probable that they thought him beneath their attention;—they answered him not a word. *

(* Mr. Rhudd published a variety of books and pamphlets, of which the following is a list:—

1. A Funeral Sermon for Mrs. Martha Clarke, who died Jan. 14, 1729–30, preached at Devonshire-square.—
2. An Elegy on the Death of the Rev. John Noble, 1730.—
3. A Sermon preached in Devonshire-square, Jan. 16, 1731, on the Death of Mr. Matthew Maddin.—

4. An Essay towards a new Explication of the Doctrines of the Resurrection, Millennium, and Judgment, 1734.–
5. The Doctrine of the Divine Being under his grand distinguishing Characters of God, Father, and Spirit; a Sermon occasioned by the Anniversary of the Foundation of the Meeting-house, Snow_s-fields, Aug.1, 1735.–
6. Three Letters to the Calvinistical Baptist Board, 1737–
7. Two Anniversary Sermons for the First of August, 1736, 1737.–
8. A Funeral Sermon for Mrs. Ginn, 1738.–
9. The Doctrine of the Lord Jesus Christ; more especially with regard to his Person as Mediator, Aug.1, 1738.–
10. The Doctrine of the Lord Jesus Christ pre-existing his state of Incarnation, as Man and Mediator, by the production of his Human Spirit in Union with the Father from everlasting; the substance of six Sermons, 1740.–
11. A Defense of the plain Account of the Sacrament of the Lord_s Supper, 1741.–
12. A Negative to the Question, Whether is the Archangel Michael our Saviour? Explained and defended; in a Letter to the Right Rev. the Lord Bishop of Clogher, 1753.–
13. 33X?)X?9?T; or, *Observations on the English Letters: being an Attempt to reform our Alphabet, &c.* 1755.)

After Mr. Rhudd had conformed, the place of worship was taken by Mr. John Wesley, of which an account has been given, p.290.

A Mr. Thomas Charlton, who had been a Methodist minister, was baptized here by Mr. Hughes in 1772, and continued preaching at Snow_s-fields till his death in 1774. After him was a Mr. Cartwright, a Paedo-baptist,* who preached here several years. The next minister was Mr. Martin Ready, also a Baptist, who kept a school at Peckham, and died Feb. 11, 1805. He was succeeded by Mr. Mansil, who was an Arian Baptist. It then passed into the hands of the Welch Methodist; but for the last few years it has been again occupied by a Baptist congregation under the care of Mr. Francis. [* There was one of this name a Baptist in London, in 1754.]

VOLUME III.

BOOK. II.

1726: Church in Colliers -rents.

CHURCH IN COLLIERS_-RENTS.

THIS is in the Borough, and is the same place which is now called Colliers_-rents Meeting. The church was constituted upon the mixed communion plan, Dec. 16, 1726. Some few of the members had left Miles_s-lane.

Mr. CLENDON DAWKES, mentioned under some former articles, was the first minister. He had been assisted in his education for the ministry by the Baptist fund. When he settled here, in 1726, the church consisted of thirty-four members. He left them in 1730, and settled with the Joiners_-hall church, which met in Devonshire-square.

1740: Mr. John Phillips.

Mr. JOHN PHILLIPS, a Welchman, succeeded him in March, 1731. He had been minister of the church at Wrexham and, on his settling in London, was received a member of the society at the Coffee-house. He was dismissed from the church in Colliers_-rents because _he declared, before the church, that he could not break bread to us because we were for mixed communion, and it was now contrary to his conscience._ The author of a manuscript history of the London churches says of him, _he appears to be an honest man, but neither understands good English, (whatever he may Welch,) nor appears to know much in theology. He is not so much followed as his predecessor; and as the people are the lower sort, they will find it very difficult to support themselves. His people, too, are given to change, and are ready to cry up every new light as the best._

Mr. Phillips was in London in April 1735, and, it appears; went after this to Guildford. I find that in June 1740, a complaint was sent against him by that church to the ministers in London, who _advised, that the people who are dissatisfied with Mr. Phillips continue together, and pray one with another, and watch over one another in love, waiting for the issues of Providence, and avoiding any thing which may have the appearance of resentment,_ &c. It appears he left Guildford at this time. A writer in the *Protestant Magazine*, vol. vi. p. 54. says, _Mr. Phillips proved an intemperate character, and after being discarded at Colliers_-rents, and many attempts to settle at various places in the country, where he was acceptable until his sottishness exposed him, he was universally neglected by the denomination to which he professed to belong, and died in great poverty and contempt._ This is a very affecting statement, that a minister of acceptable talents, after being many years employed as public teacher of the sanctifying doctrines of the gospel, should have so degraded himself by sottish practices, as to sink into universal contempt. Wickedness in him was highly aggravated, and must have justly provoked the Almighty to *give him up to his own heart_s lust*, and then *he walked in his own counsels*, and was evidently *a vessel to dishonour*. It was right such a minister should be disowned by the denomination to which he professed to belong, that they might not, by countenancing him, partake of his sin. If ministers, while preaching the gospel, live secretly in the sensual gratification of sinful lusts, they should immediately, on being discovered, be put out of the public ministry; as no man should be received as teacher of religion who does not *purge himself from these*, or who is not *a vessel unto honour*,

*sanctified, and meet for the Master's use, and prepared unto every good work. Nor should a minister who has fallen into gross sins, be ever restored unto his office, unless he has given full proof of his repentance and reformation; and that God has again, by his Spirit, created in him a clean heart, and renewed a right spirit within him. But for a man to continue preaching, notwithstanding the discovery of his sins, and reproach consequently upon it, and for the people to support and countenance him in doing so, is a reproach, a blot, and a disgrace to the holy name by which we are called. It is to the honour of the Baptists that but few instances have occurred like that of Mr. Phillips and that in most cases such men have not found supporters, except among those professors who have, either from a corrupt creed or wicked practices, been desirous to obtain countenance from a minister equally corrupt and wicked, thus furnishing a frightful comment upon the prophets' language,—*They eat up the sin of my people, and they set their heart upon iniquity. And there shall be like people, like priest; and I will punish them for their ways, and reward them for their doings, &c. Hosea iv. 8, 9.**

1741: Mr. Daniel Stevens.

Mr. DANIEL STEVENS was settled as pastor April 22, 1733, having been dismissed from a church at Weedon and Flower. There is no further account of him excepting that he was living in 1741. I have seen no proof of his having been a Baptist; but the church after this had Paedobaptist ministers.

VOLUME III.

BOOK. II.

1671–1724: Church at Joiners -hall, removed to Pinners -hall and Devonshire-square.

CHURCH AT JOINERS_-HALL.

THIS building, which was one of the city halls belonging to the Joiners_ Company, was situated in Joiners_-hall-buildings, formerly called Friars_-lane. It is supposed that one of our oldest churches met here, though there are no records earlier than the reign of Charles II. Mr. John Harris, who was pastor here in 1671, was one of the seven London pastors who convened the General Assembly in 1689. (See vol. i. p. 480) He was accompanied by Messrs. Samuel Boreal, William Dicks, and John Merriot, as messengers to that Assembly. It should seem that he died soon after: for at the next meeting of the Assembly, in 1692, two ministers of this church attended; these were Messrs. Tobias Russel and Thomas Marriot of these ministers we have no further particulars.

It was in the year 1692 that Mr. JOSEPH MAISTERS removed from Theobalds, to take charge of this church. Among its members were some distinguished person, viz. Sir Gregory Page, Bart. And his lady Dame Mary Page, of whom some particulars will be given in the course of its history: it is probable these were both baptized by Mr. Maisters.

In the year 1694, this church is mentioned as dismissing a member to that in Petty France, and as being also in the same association as that in Devonshire-square. In 1705 it became associated with twelve other churches, Mr. Maisters, (the pastor,) and two deacons, (Mr. Richard Pain, and Mr. John Travers,) attending as messengers. In the next year, on March 25, the General Assembly of ten churches was held at this place, when Mr. Joseph Stennett preached the sermon, and presided as the moderator.

It is not known for what reason, but the church was obliged to leave Joiners_-hall in 1708, when it removed to Pinners_-hall.

The church at Pinners_-hall, (the history of which has been already given,) occupied the place in the morning only of the Lord_s day. It was let out to other congregations the remaining parts of the day. This was also frequently the case in other places, a circumstance which, in some instances, has made it difficult to trace the succession of pastors in distinct churches. Dr. Watts_s congregation, which had assembled in the afternoon at Pinners_-hall, removing in 1708, Mr. Maisters and his people took it. Here they continued till 1724, when they removed to Devonshire-square, occupying that place alternately, in the morning and afternoon, until the church became extinct.

1728: Mr. Richardson.

Of Mr. Joseph Maisters see an account in vol. ii. p. 183–187. He died in 1717, and was succeeded by Mr. Thomas Richardson, who came to London in 1718, from Tottlebank in Lancashire, of which church he had been the pastor for four years, having been ordained there in 1710. When the Baptist fund was formed, this church (said to have been late under the care of Mr. Maisters) was applied to on October 15, 1717, through a Mr. Goddard, one of the deacons. The Rev. Messrs. Stinton and Thomas Harrison were the messengers. The next year, 1718, the church paid into the fund ?55. 18s. 6d. In 1724, Mr. Richardson, who was the then pastor, took his place as a manager of the fund with Mr. Davis, a messenger.

The congregation left Pinners_-hall in 1724, and applied for the use of Devonshire-square. In the minutes which relate to that transaction, they are repeatedly called that _honourable church,_ though it does not appear why that epithet was used; unless it was because of its antiquity, or on account of the opulence of some of its members. In the arrangements which were entered into between the two churches, it appears that the church of Pinners_-hall was to pay ten pounds per year for the use of Devonshire-square meeting, and three pounds to the clerk _for setting the psalm before the first prayer and after the last prayer._

We know but little of Mr. Richardson. His name is among the non-subscribing ministers at the Salters_-Hall synod, from which it appears he was more tenacious for his *dissenting* than for his *orthodox* principles. In 1723 he wrote a letter to Mr. Emanuel Gifford of Bristol, respecting his son Mr. Andrew Gifford, at that time a member of the church under his care. In 1728, he preached and published a funeral sermon at Devonshire-square, for the Lady Dowager Page, from 2 Tim. iv. 7, 8. Mr. Thomas

Harrison, of Wild-street did the same; and at the same place. This also was published. On this singular occasion, Mr. (afterward Dr.) John Gill published a curious tract, entitled, An Essay on the original of Funeral Sermons, Orations, and Odes, occasioned by two funeral discourses lately published, on the death of Dame Mary Page, relict of Sir Gregory Page, Bart. The one by Mr. Harrison, with an Oration at her Interment, and an Ode sacred to her Memory: the other by Mr. Richardson; with some Observations on each of them. In a Letter to a Friend._

I appears from this essay, that Mr. Harrison had been requested to preach the funeral sermon by Mr. Lewis Way and his Lady, who were nearly related, because they suspected Mr. Richardson had not ability to compose, preach, and publish a sermon which might be acceptable.

From some extracts, made by Mr. Gill, it should appear that the talents of Mr. Richardson were respectable. The following paragraph is selected. Speaking of the righteousness of Christ, says Mr. G., he has expressed himself very judiciously. When the Christian hath made the greatest advances in holiness, he cannot but reflect upon his own conduct with shame and blushing: it is in the righteousness of the Redeemer only, we can appear spotless at the throne of God: this is the Christian's sole dependance, this his joy, this his comfort, under a view of his own imperfections, even this, that he has a righteousness to trust to, and depend upon, which is equal to all that the law has demanded. This single paragraph, adds Mr. Gill, I will venture to say, is worth Mr. Harrison's whole sermon. *

(* Dr. Gill's Sermons and Tracts, vol.iii.p.623.)

There is no account of the time of Mr. Richardson's death, but I suppose it was about 1733; so that he must have preached in London fifteen years, at Pinners'-hall five years, and in Devonshire-square ten years.

1728: Dame Mary Page.

As Dame Mary Page died during the time of his filling the pastoral office, this seems to be the proper place for introducing a short account of her character, premising that it is taken from Mr. Harrison's Funeral Sermon, Oration, and Ode! In the Ode Mr. H. exclaims,

At length the Heroine's crowned. Her numerous foes,

With whom she long conflicted, are subdued;

Under her feet they're laid; while she, in strains

Angelic, sings the praises of the Lord. *

(* Dr. Gill says, speaking of this composition, _I confess, Sir, I have but little judgment in poetry, yet I am ready to conclude, it is the best of these his performances._)

She was, says Mr. H. _the relict of Sir Gregory Page Bart. who was himself many years an honourable member of this (Pinners_-hall) church, and whose death was most justly lamented but the whole body of Protestant Dissenters; for they were sensible of his readiness zealously to espouse and support their common interests, and liberty of serving God according to their consciences._

Speaking of the Lady Dowager, Mr. H. says, _It was her happiness to have the benefit of an early education; and in her early time of life her heart was inclined to seek the God of her fathers. She took great pains to consult controversial works relating to the grounds of the dissent from the established church, making it her practice to conform her sentiments and conduct to the rule of the Scriptures. Her sentiments respecting baptism were founded upon Mark xvi.16, and Acts vii.12. After five years diligent search, being fully convinced it was her duty to put on the Lord Jesus by Baptism, she was baptized, in the presence of above 200 people, and was added to the church then under the care of the Rev. Mr. Maisters. How great an ornament she was to her holy profession, and how careful to adorn the doctrine of God in all things, there are many witnesses in this assembly.

_For the last four or five years of her life she was greatly afflicted with a dropsy, and during that time having read a Defence of Episcopacy, in the _Preface to Dr. Warren_s Impartial Church,_&c. she anew examined her religious opinions. The result of these inquires was,_ says Mr. H. _that she was of too catholic a spirit to blame, or even to think the worse of those who preferred the established church; yet, for her own part she declared, she had no doubts, from any motives suggested to her consideration, to induce her to think she was under the necessity of making a better choice; but had abundant reason to bless God whose grace enabled her to persevere steadfast and immoveable._

In describing her character Mr. H. says, _God had blessed her with many endowments of body and mind, as well as rendered her eminent in the exercise of many Christian graces. She was an affectionate friend, and very ready to do good offices. Her constant regards to this church, her tender concern for pastor and people, and her uncommon benefaction*

(* It does not appear exactly what this uncommon benefaction was. It is probable the expense of _fitting up the two pews,_ which it should seem she never occupied.)

upon their removal hither, deserve a particular acknowledgement, as does also her further bounty given in her last will for the relief of the poor members. The principle which inclined her to this had been a powerful one during the time of her life. Vast sums of money she distributed in so silent a way, that, to use our Saviours_ words, *her left hand knew not what her right hand did.* Nor could it now have been known to us, if she had not left behind an exact account of her affairs. And it appears from that account, that her

charity was truly Christian, and not confined to a party; and that she aimed at more than the preserving a miserable life, even the making those comfortable in their circumstances, who without her assistance would have felt the greatest hardships. She was a great instance of patience under long and continued weaknesses of body, and she owned with gratitude to the Divine Being his goodness to her, in the plenty and affluence he blessed her with, which procured her all human means and assistance. She was very thankful that God supported her spirits, and preserved her intellects, being reconciled to all the pains and infirmities she sustained, often repeating, *Shall we receive good at the hand of the Lord, and shall we not receive evil?*

_A few days before her death, when asked whether she had a comfortable prospect of another world, she replied, _I have, I have, I have._ And to some of her near relations she said, _Now I am going into eternity, I am able to review my past conduct with comfort, and think that what I have done is right._ And without the least groan or struggle of nature she fell asleep in Jesus, March 4, 1768._

She was buried in Bunhill-fields, where a very handsome tomb was erected to her memory. It stands on the north side, and has the following inscription:—

Here lies

DAME MARY PAGE,

Relict of Sir Gregory Page, Bart. *

(* Sir Gregory Page made a present to the Baptist Fund of twenty guineas in 1723. But the Church never sent more than 28*l*.3*s*. in any one year. The whole amount of their contributions in the course of about thirty years was less than 500*l*.)

She departed this life, on March 4, 1728,

In the 56th year of her age.

In sixty-seven months she was tapped sixty-six times,

Had taken away

Two hundred and forty gallons of water,

Without ever repining at her case,

or ever fearing its operation.

1758: Mr. Clendon Dawkes.

The Joiners'-hall church, meeting in Devonshire-square, after a vacancy of more than two years, invited Mr. Hugh Evans of Bristol to become their pastor, which he declined. In 1735, Mr. CLENDON DAWKES was chosen to that office. He had been a minister in London about fifteen years: he first was pastor of the church in Broad Street, Old Gravel-lane, Wapping, from about 1720 till 1726. At the latter period he united with a newly constituted church in Collier's rents, Southwark; and in 1730 he resigned it, it has been presumed on account of that church having been formed upon the principle of mixed communion. After spending three or four years without any settled charge, he was called to succeed Mr. Richardson in 1735, and continued with that people about sixteen years. Being at length greatly reduced by deaths or removals, they were under the necessity of dissolving their church state; it is supposed about 1761. Mr. Dawkes accepted the charge of the church at Hemel Hempstead about 1750, where he died Dec. 12, 1758.

His funeral sermon was preached by the Rev. John Brine, from 2 Cor. 5:1, the text chosen by the deceased. Mr. Brine published this sermon, entitled, *'The knowledge of future happiness the support of the saints in present troubles.'* From this discourse we extract the following account of Mr. Dawkes. *'It may now be expected that I should give a character of him, and a beautiful representation might be given of him; but I must inform you that he laid an injunction upon me not to enlarge upon his character, and that he expressed a dislike of bestowing encomiums upon the dead; however a few words concerning him may surely be allowed. He was meek, humble, and modest; wise and learned; diligent in study, there is reason to think to the prejudice of his constitution. He had an enlarged acquaintance with the evangelical scheme, and a spiritual savour of the truths of the gospel. In his last long illness which issued in his death, he was remarkably favoured with the gracious presence of God, and filled with a holy admiration of sovereign grace and mercy. Those glorious truths which he recommended to you, were the matter of his support, consolation, and unspeakable joy in the views of his dissolution.'*

It would have been pleasant had Mr. Brine said something of the usefulness of Mr. Dawkes's labours, and shown that *'his enlarged acquaintance with the evangelical scheme'* had been the means of his building up and enlarging the church of God. Instead of this, it should seem that the congregations he served in London declined under his hands, and soon became extinct. It is a very affecting circumstance, that *'evangelical truth'* should be preached without sinners being converted, and the church of God increased by it. *The kingdom of heaven*, said our Lord, *is like unto a net cast into the sea, which gathered of every kind.* But is there not some serious defect in casting the net by those ministers who do not become what our Lord promised his apostles they should be, *fishers of men*? Those ministers who follow our Lord's example in his public ministry, and who attend to this commission, and *preach the gospel to every creature*, appear to me to cast the net into the sea, and therefore may expect to catch *men*. Success is from God, but we ought not to expect to be favoured with it, if we do not use the appointed means, and in the appointed way.

1761: Remarks on the Dissolution of the Church.

Thus terminated the existence of the Joiners'-hall church, which had existed more than a century, and which was, at one period of its history, remarkably prosperous and respectable; the honourable church, as the courtly members of Devonshire-square church chose to express themselves concerning it.

It may not be easy to trace all the circumstances which led to the gradual decline and final dissolution of this honourable church: could this be accurately done, it would no doubt be a profitable lesson for other churches similarly constituted, to avoid the shoals and quicksands on which it was stranded, and the rocks on which it was shipwrecked.

One cause, and perhaps a principal one, was its having no settled place of worship. The unsettled state of things during the reign of that capricious monarch, Charles II. would necessarily prevent the Baptists from erecting meeting-houses, as there was no certainty of their being permitted to use them. There were but few, if any, meeting-houses built in London before the declaration of Charles, in 1672. Now, says Burnet, all was grace and favour to the Dissenters, and many of their ministers took out licences to preach, and their people erected places for worship. About ten years afterwards, in 1683, the most violent measures were resorted to for suppressing the Dissenters, so that they were obliged to shut up their places of worship, and many of their ministers were committed to prison.

When James II. for the purpose of humbling the Church of England, and to introduce the papists, published his declaration for liberty of conscience, in 1687, some of the Baptist and other ministers in London presented addresses to the king, thanking him for his clemency and royal condescension. The Baptists now returned to their great meeting places, and took others as large as they could procure. (See vol. i. p. 470) Many of these were the city halls belonging to the different companies of liverymen: consequently they were subject to the will of those companies. They probably took them only for short terms, and at the expiration of their leases, either from an exorbitant advance of rent, or some other causes, could not renew them: in which case, instead of profiting by such events, and providing against them by erecting places of worship, they removed to other halls. What a lamentation that some of the superfluous wealth of Sir Gregory Page, Bart. or his dowager Lady, was not devoted to such a purpose. Then, in all probability the church at Joiners'-hall would have been perpetuated, and a more splendid monument would have been erected to their memory than the pageant which stands in Bunhill-fields.

It is likely, too, that the supineness of the people and their indolence of the ministers, contributed not a little towards that event. How disgusting, that ministers in full health, and in the vigour of youth, should preach only once a day to the churches of which they were pastors! It was not likely that spiritual life, union, and zeal, would be excited by such scanty labours, however excellent and learned the sermons might be: nor that the members of such churches would say, *Let what will happen, we will not forsake the house of our God.*

What influence the kind of doctrinal preaching of Mr. Dawkes might have to reduce the church, cannot be ascertained with precision: it is evident, however, that it was not the means of presenting the removals of many of the members to other churches, nor of counteracting that desponding spirit among those who remained, which led them to consent to the dissolution of the church. It is a little remarkable, that not only this church, but that of the Rev. John Brine, the eulogist of Mr. Dawkes's evangelical system, has also gradually degenerated in purity of sentiment, and declined in numbers, till it too is ranked with the dissolved churches. These remarks are not made in the way of asperity, but with a design that all our ministers and churches may rigidly watch against any departure, whether in doctrinal sentiments, or in purity of discipline, from _ the simplicity of Christ;_ and to stir up those who are in a declining condition to listen to our Lord's exhortation to the angel of the church in Sardis, *—I know thy works, that thou hast a name that thou livest, and art dead. Be watchful, and strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die*, Rev. 3:1,2.

VOLUME III.

BOOK. II.

1688: Church at Tallow-chandlers -hall.

CHURCH AT TALLOW-CHANDLERS_-HALL

MAITLAND, calls this building a _stately hall._ It is a spacious and elegant building, situated on Dowgate-hill; adorned with columns and arches of the Tuscan order. It was used for about half a century after the period of the Revolution by a Baptist congregation. I think it probable that two churches occupied it at different parts of the day, under the care of Mr. Elias Keach and Mr. John Noble. The former of these ministers, with part of his people, left it in 1697; and I conjecture that those who remained united with Mr. Noble's people, it being expressly said, that _he became the pastor of a church here, composed of two congregations._*

(* Crosby says, _Mr. Henry Danvers was joint-elder of a baptized congregation near Aldgate._ In Milton's State Papers, p. 121, there is an address about the year 1656, to the Lord General Cromwell, and his Council of State, entitled _The humble representation of the congregation of Jesus Christ, usually meeting at the Chequer Without Aldgate._ This was signed by fourteen names, among whom were J. Danvers, (probably a mistake for H. Danvers,) and Samuel Oates. The last mentioned is the minister who was imprisoned, and fettered, and tried for murder, by the Presbyterians, at Chelmsford, in 1646, because a young woman who had been baptized had died a few weeks after. As the charge was not supported by evidence, his enemies had not the gratification of seeing him hanged. vol. i. p.197)

1697–1730: Church at Tallow-chandlers -hall.

This worthy minister was a member of the church in Petty France. His name is high in the list of the members there in 1675. He was doubtless called to the ministry there, and must have had great advantages from the learning and piety of its worthy pastors, Mr. William Collins and Dr. Nehemiah Coxe.

In the records of the church of Petty France, there is an account of the appointment of _four members of that church to meet four of brother Nobles_ church, at the coffee-house in Finch-lane._ This was at the beginning of the year 1702. I conjecture, therefore, that he was at that time pastor of the church Without Aldgate, of which Mr. Danvers had been pastor. Mr. Edward Man, whose name appears in the list of members 1675, (and who is said in those records to have succeeded as the pastor in Aldgate when Mr. Danvers removed to Holland in 1687,) attended the General Assemblies in 1689, and 1692, as pastor of a church in Houndsditch; and therefore it is very likely that Mr. Noble succeeded him, and removed the people to Tallow-chandlers_-hall at the end of the year 1697. This will agree exactly with Mr. Wallin_s statement in his funeral sermon for Mr. Noble, who died June 12, 1730, that he had filled the station of pastor _with great honour, integrity, and usefulness, for about thirty-four years, in all which time he truly manifested himself a minister of the grace of Christ._

Mr. Noble had suffered much persecution when a youth on account of being the son of Dissenters, and had often been in prison with his parents before he knew the grace of God in truth. _In the early part of his life,_ says his biographer, _which was a time of persecution, he used to attend his religious parents to the worship of God, and was with them and others apprehended and sent to the common goal, in which he suffered much hardship from the enemies of true religion and liberty; concerning which he used to say, that though he suffered for the profession of religion, yet, at that time, he was destitute of the saving knowledge of Christ; he would hence very justly observe, that a religious education, a mere profession, or zeal for a party, might carry persons a great length in suffering for Christianity, while at the same time, they are strangers to themselves, and the powerful influences of the grace of the gospel. The all-wise disposer of all persons and things, ordered his imprisonment to great advantage in the end; for while he was confined, only for the profession of religion, the Lord was graciously pleased to work a saving change upon his heart; there he began to receive the light, and feel the power of divine grace, which afterwards, by the supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ, was much increased, to the establishment and joy of his own soul, and rendered him greatly useful in the church of God. Here also he pursued his studies for useful knowledge, in which he made so considerable a progress, that he was able, upon proper occasions, to defend as well as to preach, the glorious truths of the Gospel. Soon after his enlargement he submitted to the laws of Christ, and being baptized upon the profession of his faith, was added to a gospel church; who plainly perceiving his capacity for the ministry, soon called him to that work, and sent him to preach the gospel to other churches; in which he was, through the Divine blessing attending his labours, greatly successful in the whole course of his ministry._*

(* See Wallin_s Sermon, p. 31-33.)

He preached occasionally to several churches in the country while he resided in London, and kept a grammar school for his support. He objected for several years to take upon

himself the pastoral charge, thinking he could be more useful in preaching the gospel, without charge, to poor congregations. He was thirty-seven years of age when he settled at Tallow-chandlers_-hall, over the two congregations, as has been before stated. He continued there till about 1727, when the congregation removed to a place in Maidenhead-court, Great Eastcheap, where we shall give other particulars concerning him. See also vol. ii. 342-345.

Mr. Samuel Wilson was an assistant for a few years to Mr. Noble, till he accepted the pastoral office at Gravel-lane, Wapping, in the year 1720. He preached also an evening lecture at Tallow-chandlers_-hall, which was very numerously attended. When Mr. Wilson settled at Wapping, Mr. Noble had as an assistant Mr. Peter Davenport.

It should seem that Mr. Noble was not very friendly with the other ministers at the commencement of his ministry, his church not being connected with the assemblies in 1704 and 1705. He belonged, however, to the Society of Ministers of _ the particular persuasion,_ which met at the Gloucestershire Coffee-house, on Monday afternoon. He seems to have attended these meetings pretty constantly, and was often in the chair, between the years 1723 and 1727.

VOLUME III.

BOOK. II.

1730: Church at Great Eastcheap.

CHURCH IN GREAT EASTCHEAP.

THIS meeting-house was situated in Maidenhead-court. It was a large square building with three galleries, containing about seven hundred people. Underneath it were shops, and the way to it from Great Eastcheap was through a passage into the court. It was left unoccupied for some time; and was pulled down about twenty years since, and a large warehouse built upon its scite.

1730: Mr. John Noble.

Some time between 1726 and 1730, Mr. Noble_s congregation removed to this place from Tallow-chandlers_-hall. The congregation was then in a very prosperous state, the people _expressing a very great love for the gospel, and generously contributing towards it; manifesting strong affection for its aged and honoured pastor, by the most kind and generous treatment, even to the end of his life._ *

(* Funeral Sermon for Mr. Noble, by Mr. Edward Wallin.)

Mr. Noble was at this time nearly seventy years of age, and had gained a good degree of the respect and confidence of his brethren in the ministry, being looked up to by them as a father of the London churches. He preached at the ordination of Mr. (afterward Dr.) John Gill, from Acts 20:28. He was a very strenuous defender of the Calvinistic doctrines, which at times led him to be suspected of uncharitableness towards those who differed from him. But when he filled the chair at the Society of Ministers, he behaved with that prudence and moderation, which astonished many who were acquainted with the zeal he displayed in defending the doctrines which he held. Crosby mentions as a proof of his liberal spirit, that _though he was very strenuous in opposing the practice of the laying on of hands at the ordination of ministers, yet he attended that of Mr. Gill, where it was observed, without saying a word against it, considering those who practised it as acting conscientiously.

Mr. Crosby, who knew Mr. Noble, speaks very respectfully of his character, as a man of learning and excellent parts. He says, that he was reported to be an Antinomian, but intimates that this charge was unjustly fixed upon him, and that though some Calvinists had run into extremes, and might be generally known by their pride and uncharitableness, and the disturbances which they caused in churches by the spirit they manifested, yet Mr. Noble was not of that description. He appears to have been precisely of the sentiments of those worthy men, Skepp, and Brine, and Gill, and of many in or own time; who, though they are opposed to the general invitations of the gospel, are also most strongly inimical to the peculiar features of the Antinomian scheme, viz. that sanctification, by the Holy Spirit, is not personal and progressive; and that the moral law of God is not a rule of life to believers in Christ.

Mr. Noble generally attended the meeting at the Gloucestershire Coffee-house, and when present appears usually to have filled the chair: this distinction arose doubtless from a respect for this age and usefulness. The last time he attended this meeting was March 20, 1726–27. He died June 12, 1730, in the seventy-first year of his age, and was buried in the Baptist burying-ground in the park, Southwark.

The church requested Mr. Edward Wallin to preach the funeral sermon for their late esteemed pastor, and afterwards were unanimous in soliciting him to publish it. Mr. Wallin, to express his _heartly esteem for their late honoured pastor, and also for the church, _ complied with their request. In the dedication of this sermon to the church, he says, _It was preached upon as mournful an occasion, as perhaps the church had ever met with. The removal of such a pastor, _ he adds, _is indeed a very awakening providence, and loudly calls on you to consider what improvement you have made under his excellent ministry; and also to wait, by faith and prayer, on the Great Shepherd, to enable you, as you have *received Christ Jesus the Lord, so to walk in him*, considering what is at this time the proper work for every member._

When it is known that Mr. Edward Wallin was not of the same views respecting the manner in which the unconverted should be addressed in the ministry of the gospel, it will appear the more amiable in the church, who invited him to preach on such an occasion. *

(*Mr. Wallin had preached a funeral sermon there not long before for a Mr. Samuel Edwards.)

The subject discussed by Mr. Wallin, was Phil. 1:21; *For me to live is Christ, and to die is gain*. The sermon is entitled, _ The Redeemer magnified by the Ministers of the Gospel, both in Life and in Death._ Under the head that ministers of the gospel are called ambassadors for Christ, Mr. Wallin says, _And when they have set forth their Lord_s greatness and grace, they address themselves to them as those who have compassion for their souls. The ministry of reconciliation being committed to them, their great concern is to deal with the hearts of men, in order to their being willing subjects of a dear Redeemer; and therefore, as an ambassador for Christ, as though God did beseech sinners by him, the tenor of their address is, *I pray you in Christ_s stead, be ye reconciled to God*: so that their whole concern is to serve Christ, by endeavouring in his name to reconcile sinners to God: and surely such ambassadors do certainly magnify and honour their Prince._

Thus Mr. Wallin, and the church in Great Eastcheap, exemplified that _love and unity,_ though _Calvinists differing in opinion from each other,_ which Mr. John Brine afterwards (and who was at that time a member of the Society of Ministers) so powerfully and affectionately recommended. Had the friends of Mr. Noble been as contracted and censorious as some worthy ministers and churches of the present day, they would never have unanimously requested Mr. Wallin to publish a sermon, however evangelical, which contained the obnoxious sentiment, that _the tenor of the ministers_ address to unconverted sinners is, *I pray you in Christ_s stead, be ye reconciled to God*._

The description which Mr. Wallin gives of Mr. Noble_s ministry is also very highly creditable to his liberality. His opinion that the deceased minister had not fully set before the unconverted their duty to repent and believe the gospel, did not lead him to detract from the general excellency of his character, and the usefulness of his ministry.

The following is the character which Mr. Wallin gives of him.—_The Scripture doctrine of the ever blessed Trinity, the divinity of Christ, the efficacious operations of the Holy Spirit, he esteemed to be necessary articles of his faith, and parts of his public ministrations. His clear apprehensions of electing love, and the rich display of sovereign grace in the everlasting covenant, were plainly discovered to many, by a turn of thought, and plainness of expression, almost peculiar to himself. When he considered the concern of God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, in the contrivance and execution of the divine scheme for the redemption and salvation of lost sinners, he was even in a holy ecstasy, when he expressed himself upon that glorious subject. Christ was his delightful theme; he loved to dwell upon the glorious person, offices, and fullness, of the Redeemer, in his public ministry; and was so happy, as to explain and improve those great doctrines, to the profit and satisfaction of his hearers, beyond most other ministers. He frequently insisted upon the priestly office of Christ; and in a manner very clear and convincing would treat of the full satisfaction, abundant merit, and complete righteousness, of the Redeemer. Many are witnesses, that the great doctrines of efficacious grace, of the indwelling of the Spirit, of imputed righteousness alone for justification in the sight of God, and the final perseverance of the saints, took up a great part of his ministry; though he well knew how

to lay open the miserable case of sinners by nature, and preach free and full salvation to such by Christ alone, in a very plain and affecting manner.

It hath been observed by many, that in his public addresses to God, he seemed to be favoured with an eminent degree of the Spirit of grace and supplication, whereby he was enabled to come boldly to the throne of grace. How would he draw nigh to God, in a Mediator, with holy reverence, and yet with a becoming freedom, pleading with him as his own God, as one having received the Spirit of adoption, crying *Abba, Father!* In this work he appeared to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, and to plead with the Lord, as one used to converse with him, and graciously admitted by faith, to nearness, communion, and fellowship with him. The freedom of spirit, and liberty of expression, with which he used to draw nigh to God, tended greatly to assist, and sweetly to enlarge the minds of others, who joined with him in that part of public worship. To what hath been observed of this eminent servant of Christ I shall only add, he was one, who, in the whole course of his ministry laboured to exalt a crucified Redeemer, and recommended him to precious souls; according to the large measure of the gift of Christ which was in him. What he apprehended to be truth, as it is in Jesus, he ministered with all boldness, freedom, and faithfulness, without regard to the censures of men; accounting himself a servant to his master alone, for the discharge of the several parts of his ministry._

Mr. Noble published a funeral sermon for Mr. Richard Robins, minister of the gospel, entitled The Believer's Triumph over Death.

1731–61: Mr. Samuel Dew.

I have heard but of one minister who was sent out by this church. This was Mr. Robert Hanwell, who, March 10, 1729–30, was ordained over the church at Kettering, and was a respectable but not a successful pastor there for nearly twenty years. He died September 1749.

Mr. Noble was succeeded in the pastoral office by Mr. SAMUEL DEW. He had been an occasional preacher among the Baptists in Gloucestershire for several years, till at length he was settled with a church at Weston near Ross, where he was very popular. In the early part of 1731 he removed to London, and settled with the congregation in Maidenhead-court. He first attended with the Society of London Ministers, Oct. 26, 1731. It is said that Mr. Dew's popularity soon declined, and that his labours were not so successful in London as they had been in the country. In consequence of no blessing attending his ministry in the conversion of sinners, the congregation gradually fell away, till at last, after he had preached nearly thirty years, the lease expiring, the church being unable to renew, it was dissolved in 1760. *

(* In 1753 the church consisted of about forty members; see p. 278.)

Most of the surviving members joined the church under the care of Dr. Gill; where also Mr. Dew communicated at the Lord's table till his death, which took place a few years

after the dissolution of the church. The last time he attended with the ministers at the Coffee-house, appears to have been March 24, 1761.

In Mr. Joshua Thomas's manuscript account of the church at Weston near Ross, in Herefordshire, he says, "Mr. Dew was very useful and acceptable in the country, but his removal to London seemed like a step out of his proper sphere. He lived there many years; but though a godly man, and sound in the doctrines of the gospel, yet the church declined under his hands, and broke up before he died. He was still respected in the city, and preached occasionally while he was able."

Mr. Dew is said to have been a man of respectable character and of good talents, and much esteemed by the admirers of what is called high, or hyper Calvinism; but the manner in which he explained some doctrines of grace was considered by others as having an Antinomian tendency. The only sermon he published was a funeral sermon for Mrs. Mary Bevois, and was entitled, "Assurance of Interest in a living Redeemer, the

Saints support both in Life and in Death; preached at Dr. Gill's place in Goat-street, April 1, 1735."

The sermon is a mere doctrinal discussion of the subject of "assurance," &c. with scarcely a line of application, or a word of exhortation to the practical duties of religion. The few lines that follow are about the whole amount of application. Speaking to the relations of the deceased, Mr. Dew says, "*Labour not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life, which the Son of Man shall give unto you; for him hath God the Father sealed;*" the meaning of which, in his estimation, seems merely to have been, "Use the means which God has appointed; hear the gospel preached, in which Christ is revealed as the object of faith, and by which men are instructed in the way of salvation." The reader will remark, that Mr. Dew's application of the principles of our Lord's address was very different from the use which the Lord Jesus made of them to his unconverted hearers, to whom he addressed them. They understood the Lord Jesus to mean, that they should seek for *spiritual blessings*, even those blessings which would *endure to everlasting life*: but they did not apprehend that they were encouraged and directed to apply by faith to the anointed Messiah, the Son of Man, to obtain these blessings; and therefore they asked, *What shall we do that we might work the works of God?* Jesus answered and said to them. *This is the work of God, that ye believe in him whom he hath sent*, John vi. 27, 29.

It is by no means wonderful that a system of preaching like that of which the above is a specimen, should, in a few years, turn a *faithful land into barrenness*, and make a flourishing church a *desolate heritage*! Mr. Dew's name will appear in history very differently to that of his honoured predecessor, in having ruined the garden which the former had planted.

The grand difference between the ministry of Mr. Noble and Mr. Dew appears to have been, that the former preached the doctrines of sovereign and distinguishing grace, spiritually, experimentally, and practically; and the other, systematically, speculatively,

and controversially. Hence the ministry of Mr. Noble was the cause of many being gathered out of the world into the church, and of *helping them much who had believed through grace*; and that of Mr. Dew, of exciting a captious and censorious spirit among the members of the church, which led them to *bite and devour one another*: and as no others were induced to join their fellowship, they were soon *destroyed one of another*. The ministry of Mr. Noble resembled the conduct of a *good householder*; – he rightly divided the words of truth, the food which the doctrines of the gospel produce, distributing milk to babes, and strong meat to those of full age, whose senses were exercised to discern both good and evil. The ministry of Mr. Dew, on the other hand, resembled that of a person unskillful in the word of righteousness; while he was always handing out what he, perhaps, and his friends considered to be strong meat, he left them so ignorant of the nature and design of the gospel, that when for the time they ought to have been teachers, it had become necessary, from the nature and tendency of his preaching, that some other should teach them what were the first principles of the oracles of God.

Another cause of the decline of this church is probably to be traced to a dispute in the year 1741–2, between a Mr. Bevois and a Mr. Anderson, deacons of the church, on a matter of trade. This matter was brought before the Society of Ministers, and by them it was recommended that the matter of contention should be left, under arbitration bonds, to two persons of the same trade, jointly chosen, and that Mr. Edward Wallin should be the referee. After this the ministers and deputies were requested to meet on this business at Mr. Dew's meeting-house. There came an abusive letter, highly reflecting upon the ministers and deputies. This letter was ordered to be laid before Mr. Dew's church, with a complaint respecting Mr. Bevois, a member and officer in that church, for his conduct in sending the letter; and Mr. Samuel Wilson and Mr. Edward Wallin were appointed to deliver the same at their next church meeting. The church in Maidenhead-court took it into consideration, and reprov'd Mr. Bevois, who, so far from receiving it with kindness, and as an excellent oil which would not break his head, was very much offended, conformed to the Church of England, and the church resolved to exclude him after he was no longer with them.

It is easy to perceive what a flame of angry contention the church must have been in on an occasion of this nature. An affair of trade was not likely to be settled by the members of the church, even though at a church-meeting; nor were ministers suitable parties as arbitrators in such a case, who ought to have recollected the advice of Apelles to the cobbler, or rather the proverb of Solomon, (Prov. 26:17,) *He that passeth by, and meddleth with strife belongeth not to him, is like one that taketh a dog by the ears*. Whoever else may escape being injured, he is almost certain of getting bitten and wounded by the provoked animal. It would be well if such matters, when they take place in our churches, were referred for investigation and decision to reputable tradesmen, who are not members of the church to which the parties belong; and if it should afterwards appear that either party had violated the laws of God, or the spirit of the gospel, by their conduct towards each other, then to proceed according to the precepts of Christ, as they relate to matters either of *private offences*, or of *notorious crimes*. Had such a plan been pursued in the case above referred to, the churches would not have been disturbed by the

disputes of two litigious men; the ministers would not have been subjected to reproach for exercising lordly domination; the church at Maidenhead-court would not have been convulsed and shaken by being divided into parties; and Mr. Bevois might not have been so strongly persuaded that all his principles as a Dissenter from the Church of England were without weight and importance.

1729: Wednesday Lecture at Great Eastcheap.

In 1729, the year before Mr. Noble's death, a Wednesday-evening lecture was established at his place worship by Dr. Gill, who continued to preach it alone till March 24, 1756, it being more convenient for such a purpose than his own place in Goat-street, Horselydown. While the place in Carter-lane was building, which was opened in 1767, the Doctor declined this lecture. The first sermon was from Ps.71:16; *I will go in the strength of the Lord God, &c.*; and the last from Acts 24:23; *Having therefore obtained help of God, &c.* The last was published at the request of the society by whom the lecture was supported, and is entitled, *The Agreement of the Old and New Testaments.* It was thus dedicated; *To my honoured and very much esteemed friend, Thomas Watson, Esq.*

*

(*Mr. Watson was a calico-printer, and a member of the church in Curriers'-hall, who made a point of having an open table for the Dissenting ministers of the three denominations on Tuesdays. Here many of them met, and Dr Gill was generally with them, taking his part in cheerful conversation. After an early dinner they went to the respective Coffee-houses where their brethren assembled for business and social conversation. He died about the year 1770, and left to the Baptist Fund the sum of fifteen hundred pounds.)

and the rest of my very worthy friends, the subscribers to the Wednesday evening lecture in Great Eastcheap, the following Discourse is humbly inscribed by their sincere Friend and Servant in Christ, John Gill.

I chose the first text, says Dr. Gill, *when I undertook the lecture, partly to show that I engaged in this work not in my own strength, but in the strength of Christ, hoping for and expecting the aid and assistance of his Spirit and grace; and partly to show that my intentions and resolutions were to preach that great and glorious doctrine of a sinner's free justification before God, by the righteousness of Christ imputed to him, with all others that are analogous to it, or in connection with it; which Luther rightly called, articulus stantis vel cadentis ecclesiae; the article of the church standing or falling, or that by which it stands or falls; for as that doctrine is received or rejected, the church of Christ in all ages and periods of time flourishes or declines; at the close of the sermon the Doctor says, And now, my friends, I call you to bear witness that these truths, and what have been briefly suggested in this discourse, have been what I have chiefly insisted upon in the course of this lecture; namely, the—doctrines of a Trinity of persons in the Godhead; of the person and office of Christ; of the person and operations of the blessed Spirit; of special and distinguishing grace, as it appear in election, redemption, justification, adoption, regeneration, sanctification and the final perseverance of the saints; with other doctrines which are in consequence of them, and in connection with*

them. And now I am about to take my leave of you and this lecture, and I do so, not through any dislike of the work I have been so long engaged in; not through any disgust at any thing I have met with; not through any discouragement for want of attendance or subscription, I have nothing to complain of; the lecture was never in better circumstances than it now is. But I find my natural strength will not admit me to preach so frequently, and with so much constancy, as I have done for many years past; being now in the decline of life, in the fortieth year of my ministry; so that it is time for me to have done with extra-service, I mean, service out of the church of which I am pastor. But a more powerful reason is, that I may have a little more time and leisure to attend to, and finish an arduous work upon my hands,— *—An Exposition of the whole Old Testament;—* part of which work I shall immediately propose for publication; and if I meet with encouragement, the publishing of this will be an additional weight upon me; and I have no other way of easing myself, but by dropping the lecture; and these, and these only, are my reasons for so doing. And now as I would be, and am, thankful to the God of my life, who has given me so much health and strength, to carry on this lecture for such a course of years, with very little interruption for want of health; so I would, and do return thanks to you, my friends, who have so long encouraged and supported me with your presence and purse; and I heartily wish and pray, that you may be preserved from the prevailing errors of the times, and may be kept steadfast in the faith of the gospel, and abide by the truths and ordinances of it; and that the means of grace you attend upon, in season and out of season, here or elsewhere, may be blessed unto you for your comfort and edification; and *that you may grow in grace, and in the knowledge of Jesus Christ, and be made meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light.*—

After Dr. Gill had retired from his lecture, where many of his published discourses were preached, Mr. Brine, and Mr. Stevens, conducted it jointly for a few years; after which, when Great Eastcheap meeting-house was given up, it was removed to Curriers_-hall, Cripplegate. There it was carried on for some time by Mr. Brine, Dr. Joseph Stennett, Mr. Burford, and Mr. Clark. The lecture was afterwards removed to Little St. Helen_s and from thence to Devonshire-square, when it was altered to Lord_s-day evening. This was preached alone by Mr. Joseph Swain for several years. After his death it was carried on by various ministers for several years; then for a little time it was removed to the meeting-house in Prescott-street, where it wholly declined, and was finally relinquished about ten years since.

VOLUME III.

BOOK. II.

1692: Church in Goodman_s-yard.

CHURCH IN GOODMAN_S-YARD, IN THE MINORIES.

THIS church in all probability owed its origin to the preaching of the Rev. Laurence Wise, who, during the civil wars, was the minister at Aldgate church. He was the parish minister at Chatham, being probably appointed to that station by the TRIERS in 1653. It

was after this that he embraced the principles of the Baptists. He is mentioned in Dr. Calamy's account as being ejected from Chatham-dock, as a man of a learned education, and a Baptist, and as preaching to persons of that denomination for several years before his death. He further says, that _he was imprisoned in Newgate for his nonconformity in 1682, and died in 1692, about the seventieth year of his age._

Crosby says, _his congregation met latterly in Goodman's yard in the Minories: Mr. John Travers *

(*This account was probably written by Mr. Benjamin Stinton, and not by Crosby. Mr. Travers was after this a respectable deacon of the church at Joiners-hall.)

belonged to him, and had a great respect for him. When he was a prisoner for nonconformity, his friends raised fifty pounds, and put it into the hands of Mr. Travers to improve for his use. He was one of the five ministers King Charles II. sent for when he was granting liberty of conscience to the Dissenters._

From this statement it should seem that Mr. Wise and his brethren and fellow-sufferers Bampfylde, Ralphson, Griffiths, and Hercules Collins, all of the Baptist Denomination, speedily refused to admit the right of the king to exercise a dispensing power in matters of religion.

The records of the church in Petty France for 1691 mention Mr. Wise as living at that time. Several of its members united with that church, then under the care of Mr. William Collins.

It should seem from his having been sent for by the king, that he must have been a minister of distinction. He signed the letter published in vol. i. p. 420, addressed by the London ministers to Mr. Andrew Gifford of Bristol, in the year 1675, _On the duty of the unconverted to pray to God._ This church did not unite in the General Assembly in 1689, nor in 1692: the reasons for this do not appear.

VOLUME III.

BOOK. II.

1689: Church in Church-lane, Limehouse.

CHURCH IN CHURCH-LANE, LIMEHOUSE.

THIS meeting-house was situated in Church-lane, Lime-house. Mr. Leonard Harrison attended as its pastor, at the meetings of the General Assembly in 1689 and 1692. He assisted at the ordination of Mr. Thomas Harrison, at Lorimer's Hall, in 1699, and was perhaps a relation. He also attended the Assembly of Christian Churches in 1704. He probably died soon after 1705.

His successor was Mr. David Rees, of whom a few particulars only can be given. The following are taken from two letters, one written by the late Rev. Dr. William Richards of Lynn, and the other by Thomas Edwards, Esq. *

(* This gentleman, who is well known to the author, and much respected by him, is now in his 81st year, a member of the Baptist church at Southampton. He is the father of Dr. Edwards, of Doctors' Commons.)

1683: Mr. David Rees.

Mr. David Rees was born in South Wales. His father, Mr. Rees David, was a member of the church at Hengeod in the year 1701, when Mr. Morgan Griffiths undertook the pastoral care of that church. He is said to have been a very worthy person; a truly pious, active, intelligent Christian, and a zealous promoter of good order, practical piety, and evangelical discipline, among his fellow-members. He ranked among the middle class of the community, being by occupation a farmer; and conducting his affairs with integrity and discretion, he obtained in no small degree the good opinion of his neighbours. He trained up his children *in the nurture and admonition of the Lord*, and God so graciously owned his pious labours, that most, if not all of them, became members of the church in Hengeod.

When this good man first commenced his religious course; it was a period of severe persecution; so that they were obliged to meet for worship in a wood, not far from the residence of Mr. Rees David, near Caerphilly. This place of seclusion was at length discovered; and, but for their neighbours giving them timely notice, they would have been all taken, a band of soldiers being sent to apprehend them. But though they escaped _bonds and imprisonments, they suffered the spoiling of their goods;_ and could not meet for the service of God without imminent peril. In later times they ventured to build a meeting-house a great way up in the mountains, at a place called Cwmy-Glo, (the Coal-cell). Afterwards they built the meeting-house at Hengeod, of which church, his father, and a great many of his family were members. The father of Rees David died in his 91st year.

Mr. David Rees of Limehouse was born in 1683. In his youth he discovered an early fondness for learning, which his father happily encouraged. It was advantageous for this young man, that in the immediate vicinity there was a very respectable seminary, kept at a farm-house called Brynllwarch, among the hills of Glamorgan; the principal tutor of which was the Rev. Samuel Jones, M.A. who had been ejected by the act of uniformity from the vicarage of Llangynwydd. Mr. Jones had been a fellow of Jesus College in Oxford: he kept an academy at Brynllwarch many years, till his death in 1697 or 1700. To this academy, where the children of some of the best families in Wales were brought up, and where many eminent scholars finished their education, it was the happiness of Mr. Rees to be sent at an early age, and he probably staid there till his tutor's death. It is probable, therefore, from his promising parts and great thirst after learning, that he would at this seminary become well grounded in classical and academical learning. We have not heard where he went after leaving Brynllwarch, but it appears that he made a profession of religion at an early period, and joined the church at Hengeod probably about 1701. His amiable disposition, excellent character, enlarged understanding, and uncommon acquirements, soon endeared him to his worthy pastor Morgan Griffiths, and the rest of his fellow members; and he was very soon introduced by them to the work of the public ministry. His preaching met with general acceptance, and soon became the topic of conversation and applause far and near. The report of his very promising and extraordinary endowments reached London, and he very soon received a warm invitation to visit his brethren there. He appears to have removed to London about 1706; and, after preaching at different places with much acceptance, he received a pressing call to

undertake the pastoral care of the church at Limehouse, which invitation, after due consideration, he accepted.

He was solemnly ordained to the pastoral office February 19, 1705–6. Mr. Joseph Stennett and Mr. John Piggott were engaged in that service. Mr. Stennett's sermon was published, founded upon Titus 1:5. Mr. Rees became a very eminent minister of the gospel, and powerful defender of the sentiments of the Baptists.

1729: Mr. David Rees.

In the year 1729 he was consulted by the church in Wildstreet, in connection with Mr. Joseph Burroughs, as to the steps they should pursue in reference to Mr. Thomas Harrison, who they expected was about to conform to the church of England. He was soon after (Nov. 30, 1729) invited to preach for one year in the morning at Little Wildstreet: whether he complied or not does not appear.

1734: Mr. David Rees.

Mr. Rees was assisted for a little while by Mr. William Coombs, who died before him. In the funeral sermon for that young minister, Mr. Samuel Wilson thus speaks of the venerable surviving pastor:— _And surely my honoured friends, the members of this church, you must I think see the hand of the Lord upon you; to have one pastor confined by a painful disorder, so as to be almost dead to you, as to a capacity of service, for several years; and to have another just raised up, blessed a little, and then suddenly called home: it would be a very bad sign indeed if these things made no impression upon you. As the Lord shall help you, inquire carefully what may have provoked him; take care of drowsiness and barrenness, lest he should proceed to further severities; stir up one another to prayer, and entreat the Holy Spirit to enable you wisely to improve the means the Lord may yet provide for you: remember him who lately had in part the oversight of you, and endeavour to be followers of him in faith, zeal, and holiness, as far as he was a follower of Christ.

And forgive, my dear brethren, the freedom, when I say, that if you were to be more instant as a church in prayer for your excellent pastor, who knows but the Lord might restore him, and make him a remarkable blessing among you?

From this affecting statement we learn that Mr. Rees had been long prevented from labouring, and that his end appeared to be very nigh; and also that there had been a want of affection manifested towards him by the members of the church, and a decline in that spirituality and devotion for which the church had been distinguished.

Mr. Rees attended the Society of Ministers at Blackwall's Coffee-house, for the last time, April 24, 1733. It is probable he died the beginning of the year 1734, as I find the Society of ministers agreeing, May 21, to have a meeting of prayer at Devonshire-square, on Wednesday the 29th inst. to begin at ten o'clock, and to end at two, _on account of the removal of several honourable and useful ministers._

Mr. Rees published a masterly work in 1734, entitled, _Infant Baptism no Institution of Christ; and the Rejection of it justified from Scripture and Antiquity: in answer to Mr. Fowler Walker's Book, entitled, A Defence of Infant Baptism, &c. To which are

annexed, Animadversions on the Rev. Dr, Thomas Ridgeley_s Dissertation on Infant Baptism._ Octavo, pp. 290.

1747 49: Mr. Aaron Spurrier.

Mr. AARON SPURRIER, Jun. was the next pastor. He was a member of the church in Devonshire-square, where he was called to the ministry, and from which he was dismissed for the purpose of settling at Limehouse, in August 1747. His ministry was but of short continuance, as he died in about two years. Dr. Gill preached his funeral sermon from Phil. 1:23. Sept. 17, 1749. From this sermon we learn that Mr. Spurrier had the advantage of religious instruction from his childhood, his father being a minister of the word. His father dying when he was young, his pious mother brought him up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. Notwithstanding these instructions, he broke through his restraints, and, unknown to his mother, fell into the vices of the age. When his mind was illuminated by the Spirit of God, the remembrance of these things filled him with inexpressible horror and terror. His mind was at length relieved by the words of Christ to Peter being powerfully applied to his mind;—*I have prayed for thee; and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren.* From this he concluded, first, that he had an interest in the love of Christ_s heart, and in his powerful and prevalent intercession; this eased him of his burden, and gave him comfort; and secondly, that he should become a preacher of the gospel to others: he accordingly gave himself up to study the Scriptures; and to meditation and prayer. _Few young ministers,_ says Dr. Gill, _came forth with such seriousness and solidity, with such spirituality and experience, with such humility and modesty, with such fervency and affection, with such clearness of light and soundness of judgment, as he did, considering his years, and some disadvantages he laboured under. He was a burning and shining light, and his light was more and more increasing, which promised a great deal of usefulness in the church of God; and ye for a season rejoiced in his light, and it was but for a season, and a short season, too; a great deal of work was done by him among you in a little time, in the conversion of sinners, in the instruction of your minds, and the regulation of the discipline of the church._

Soon after his settlement, the meeting-house was repaired and application made to the public for assistance towards the expenses incurred; but this bright morning was soon overspread with clouds; the all-wise Disposer of events though fit to lay his hand upon him, and to afflict him with a lingering illness, which laid him aside from his work for some time, and at last issued in death.

Dr. Gill states that he had visited Mr. Spurrier twice in his illness, _during which he was for the most part very comfortable in his soul. I found his faith in Christ, the first visit,_ says the Doctor, _very strong and steady; built upon the Rock of ages; the sure foundation God has laid in Zion; observing there was no other Saviour, or better foundation, to be proposed instead of him; to him he looked, on him he depended, in him he trusted, saying he could with pleasure reflect upon the doctrines he had taught others, as yielding to himself the most solid consolation on his dying bed. At my last visit, when he had sent for me, I perceived he had had a conflict with Satan; the enemy of souls had come in upon him like a flood, putting him upon it to prove, that he ever knew what

growth in grace was; which he not being able to answer at once, he was tempted to question whether he had experienced any work of grace at all. This threw him into great concern and distress, until the Lord was pleased to deliver him by a powerful application of these words,– *I have loved thee with an everlasting love; therefore with loving-kindness have I drawn thee.* His soul was now filled brim-full of comfort, with a *joy unspeakable and full of glory*, which continued with him till the last moments, when he sweetly and easily, without a sigh or a groan, fell asleep in Jesus._

Thus, in the course of about six years; this church lost three pastors. Addressing the elder members and the *officers*, Dr. Gill exclaims, _An awful dispensation this! It should put you upon search and inquiry what should be the reason of the Lord_s coming forth among you in this manner, and of his controversy with you; and it might be reasonably thought you would be saying one to another, _Is there not an *Achan* in our camp?_ And that every one would be putting the question which the disciples of Christ did in another case, _Is it I? Is it I?_ Have you nothing to charge yourselves with? No disrespect to the doctrines of the gospel? No want of attendance on the ordinances of it? No negligence in the affairs of the church, and the discipline of it? No unsuitable and unbecoming walk and conversation in any of you? No declensions and backslidings among you, not taken notice of; and the laws of Christ against delinquents not put in execution? Something of this latter kind, I understand, was matter of concern with your late pastor, who, as I am told, has left you his dying charge. May this be of use unto you, to stir you up to be more active and diligent, to be *steadfast and unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord*; to recover backsliders, and bring them back to the fold, or to put you upon doing your duty to them._

It is evident that there are many implied censures in this faithful address, on account of the corrupt state of discipline in the church. Dr. Gill adds, however, _ I understand you are a praying people, that there is a spirit of prayer of late among you; I rejoice to hear it; you may hope for a blessing, and expect it._

1751 74: Mr. Abraham Blount and Mr. Baskerville.

The church soon after called to the ministry, and afterwards to the pastoral office, one of its own members, Mr. Abraham Blount. He was received as an approved minister by the Society of Ministers, April 23, 1751. This union, it should appear, was not a comfortable one, as we find that very serious differences existed between the church and the pastor in August, 1759: how they terminated, I have no information.

Mr. James Larwell was settled as pastor here about this period, and continued till 1769.

Mr. Baskerville, who settled here about 1770, was the last minister of the ancient church at Limehouse. By what means it was reduced so greatly from the state of prosperity it enjoyed during the ministry of Mr. David Rees, is not exactly known; but it is probable that it was owing to the want of a scriptural and holy discipline. It is affecting that so many intimations of the Saviour_s displeasure should have produced no salutary effect. This instance furnishes another practical comment upon our Lord_s threatening to the

church at Sardis;—*If therefore thou shalt not watch, I will come on thee as a thief, and thou shalt not know what hour I will come upon thee*, Rev.3:3.

The poor of this church received from Mr. Hollis's gift to the Baptist fund until the year 1774, after which I find nothing respecting it; whence I conclude that its dissolution took place in that year. Mr. Baskerville was afterwards settled at Hartford, and lived to a very old age in that city till his death.

The old meeting-house is mentioned in Maitland's list, in 1739. It was taken down about fifty years ago, and some of the materials employed in erecting the Independent meeting house in Rose-lane, Poplar. *

(* Private information) VOLUME III.

BOOK. II.

CHURCH AT AYLE-S-STREET AND ANGEL-ALLEY

1696 99: Mr. Elias Keach.

CROSBY, speaking of Mr. Elias Keach, of whom some account is given vol. ii. p. 467, says, _He erected a large meeting-house in Goodman's-fields._ This was in Ayle's [Alie, or Ayliffe] Street, and, I conjecture, was that which for many years belonged to the Presbyterians, till Socinianism, had wasted the congregation, and which, a few years since, was taken by Mr. Bailey, a Baptist.

Mr. KEACH first settled at Curriers'-hall, where he collected a considerable church. In the year 1696 he published a _Century_ of Hymns, entitled, _A Banqueting-house full of Spiritual Delights._ This is dedicated _To the Sheep and Lambs of Christ, meeting at Curriers'-hall, London, over whom I am an unworthy under-shepherd, &c. dated _from my study in Blue Anchor-alley, Bunhill-fields, on the 11th of the second month, 1696.

It must have been soon after this that Mr. Keach and his church removed to Tallow-chandlers'-hall. The next year I find him publishing a work, entitled, _The Glory and Ornament of a true Gospel-constituted Church; being a brief Display of the Discipline of the Church of Christ formerly meeting at Curriers'-hall, near Cripplegate, and now meeting at Tallow-chandlers'-hall, upon Dowgate-hill, London, Elias Keach, pastor, 1697._ It gives a very judicious representation of the order of a congregational church, and leads one to conclude that the church which would approve of such a model, must have been in a high degree of spiritual prosperity.

On leaving this place they removed to Ayliffe-street. It is very remarkable that Crosby, who was his brother-in-law, should have stated, in another part of his work, that Mr. Keach was pastor of church at Wapping, as it is very certain he never was, unless indeed he preached at Gravel-lane meeting, while the place in Aylie-street was building. His character, on some account, was greatly aspersed, and his life made bitter. But his course was quickly run; he died October 27, 1699, in the thirty-fourth year of his age.

His funeral sermon was preached, and afterwards published, by Mr. Nathaniel Wyles, pastor of a church of Christ in Paul's, Shadwell. The text is Isaiah lvii.1; *The righteous*

perisheth, and no man layeth it to heart; and merciful men are taken away, none considering that the righteous are taken away from the evil to come. The title, *‘The Saint’s Deliverance by Death from the Evil to Come.’* This is very respectfully dedicated *‘To Mr. Benjamin Keach, Father, and to Mrs. Mary Keach, the sorrowful Widow,’* as follows: *‘Honoured sir, and madam, I heartily condole your loss. It is no small affliction to you, sir, to lose your only son; and for you, madam, to lose so dear and loving a husband,’* &c. There is another *‘Epistle Dedicatory;’*—to the church of Christ meeting in Ayle_s-street, Goodman_s-fields, over whom Mr. Elias Keach was lately overseer: the blessed increase of all grace on earth, and the fullness of all glory in heaven, be your portion here and hereafter, &c. *‘The loss you have lately sustained is great; the good Lord sanctify it and make it up to you; the prophets do not live for ever. Zech. 1:5.’* In this sermon Mr. Wyles gives a few incidental hints respecting Mr. Keach_s end. *‘Prepare,’* says he, *‘to follow him who is gone a little before you. He was likely, within some months to have lived many years; but he is gone, and cut off in the noon time of age.’*

It appears too, that he died very happy. Mr. Wyles having remarked that *‘the righteous have peace of conscience, which flows from peace with God,’* says, *‘And let me tell you, this is worth more than a world: in a dying hour his end must needs be happy and in peace, that hath a smiling God, and a smiling conscience, when he comes to die. John tells us, that he who believes has the witness in himself, 1 John 5:10. His conscience speaks peace to him from the Spirit_s testimony, and is the rejoicing of his soul when he comes to die. This is our rejoicing, says Paul, the testimony of a good conscience, 2 Cor. 1:12. This was our deceased brother_s comfort and rejoicing upon his death bed, as he declared to us. ‘A good conscience,’ says one, ‘is a paradise, and the foretaste of heaven.’ He that dies with peace of conscience, flowing from peace and reconciliation with God, flies to heaven, as Noah_s dove to the ark, with the olive branch of peace in his mouth: he dies in peace, and enters into peace. But it is not thus with the wicked; he lives in peace, but dies in a storm: Terrors take hold upon him as waters; a tempest stealeth him away in the night, and as a stone hurleth him out of his place, Job xxvii.20.’*

In addressing the members of the church, who appear to have been young people, and newly collected, *‘You in this church are, as it were, but lambs,’* says Mr. Wyles; *‘but remember Christ will take care of you: he doth not only take care to feed his sheep, but also that his lambs may be fed. Look well to your choice. Take the Holy Ghost_s advice, 1 Tim. 5:22,—Lay hands suddenly on no man. See that he whom you shall choose be saved in the faith, and is of good repute among men. Let judgment rule in your choice, and not foolish affection. Seek the Lord earnestly about it. And pray that you may have a man after God_s own heart, one that may revive and carry on the cause of God among you, and may be instrumental of adding to this church, which was gathered by him now deceased. He was a man of good natural parts, which is known to many who have talked and conversed with him. There have been many things laid to his charge by some; but he declared, upon his dying bed, that he could appeal to God and good conscience upon those matters wherein he was charged with gross sins. He told me ‘he was going to his God, and my God; to his Father, and my Father;’ and also told me, ‘he had by faith laid hold on a sure foundation, the Lord Jesus Christ, and by it saw that glory which he was going to.’ He said also, ‘he should go swimming to heaven in the cleansing fountain and streams of the blood of Jesus.’ Being concerned for his family, he was satisfied with this,*

that _God was an everlasting Father, who dies not._ I instanced to him the words of good David, the day before he died, –*When my flesh and my heart fail, thou art the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever*, Ps. lxxiii. 26; and said, _ I hope, dear brother Keach, you, through grace, can say this._ He being speechless, and not able to speak to me, lifted up his hand immediately to heaven, to satisfy me, and them that were about him, that, through grace, he could say so. He resolved to rest and rely upon Christ and his righteousness alone for life and salvation; that Jesus whom he had preached to others, he trusted alone in for justification and eternal life. How instrumental he was in bringing souls to Christ, I need not mention. Here are many in this place who can call him father, and bless God that they ever saw his face or heard his voice. He preached the gospel in foreign parts with great success, and was instrumental in planting two churches there, and gathering one here. But now he_s gone, his work is done, he_ll never preach more, nor we shall ever hear him more. He hath preached in this pulpit to the conviction of some, and to the comfort of many: but now he_s gone, he_s gone, we shall see his face no more, and hear that lovely voice of his no more. Oh death! What hast thou done? To cut off such an one, who hath often warmed our hearts, and charmed our ears, and fed our souls with wholesome food. What! must we see his face no more? hear his sweet heart-affecting voice no more? What, death! hast thou deprived us of his company? Must we enjoy him no more here? Well, death, thou hast done thy worst; he hath overcome thee, the last enemy to be destroyed, (1 Cor. 15:26,) and has taken his flight to mansions above and while he is there singing hallelujahs, with a crown of glory upon his head, and palms in his hands, as tokens of honour and victory, we would be affected with this stroke, and lay it to heart; for the *righteous perisheth, and no man layeth it to heart*, _ &c.

It is not said where he was buried; but it appears that Mr. Wyles delivered an oration at the grave, which, with a funeral hymn, is appended to the sermon. An elegy was also printed with the sermon, but that I have not yet seen.

In the month of October, just before his death, Mr. Keach published two sermons. These are entitled _A Discourse of the Nature and Excellency of the Grace of Patience, delivered in two sermons by Elias Keach, preached just upon his present sore and great afflictions. London: printed for the Author, 1699._ To these sermons his friend, Mr. Nathaniel Wyles, prefixed an address to the reader, dated _Shadwell, Oct. 2, 1699,_ about three weeks before Mr. Keach_s death.

As this is creditable to the character of Mr. Keach, and contains some historical incidents which will throw some further light upon his character, I shall transcribe it.

_The author of these sermons is well know in this city and nation, as also in foreign countries; in which places he has been the instrument of doing much good to souls, and of planting several churches. There be many who can call him father, who were begotten under his ministry, and are blessing God that they ever saw his face, and heard his voice. Great work has been done, even in this city, by him; but now God has afflicted him, and we fear will call him home. He has had great and long work for patience, of which he has had a great measure; he has been quiet under the load, eyeing the hand of God in all his trials. He has looked more to God_s hand and design in suffering him so greatly to be afflicted, than at the rage of Satan, and the malice of men, who have been the instruments of a great part of his trials.

This servant of God hath been sufficiently judged and condemned by many, though I am satisfied unjustly. But it is not he whom man condemns that is condemned, but such as God condemns. Our dear Lord Jesus tells us, Matt. 5:9, 10, *Blessed are they that suffer persecution for righteousness sake, and have all manner of evil spoken against them falsely for his sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.* It is no matter what we suffer here from men, so it be but falsely, and for Christ_s sake; for the kingdom and crown of heaven is weighty enough to make amends for all. The cross is the way to the crown; for they that suffer with and for Christ here, shall reign with him hereafter in glory, Rom. 8:19.

_Tis sad to hear how he hath been reproached, though there are many know it is unjustly, and have cleared him; but none like to that testimony which now on his sick bed he declares he has in his own conscience. Who can stand before envy?

_Reader, I shall detain thee no longer from what follows; but desire that God may bless it, and make it of great and good use to thy soul. I subscribe myself.

Your servant for Christ_s sake,

N. WYLES_

The sermons of Mr. Keach are founded upon James 1:4; *But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing.* To give the reader a specimen of the argument and style, I make an extract from the first sermon, p.7. _ The third branch of this description, when patience hath her perfect work, is, baring up against the billows of opposition and affliction. _Tis no hard matter to be quiet and patient when in peace and without trouble; for a man to have a competent satisfaction while all things run smoothly, and according to his heart_s desire; while a man sits under his own vine and fig-tree, while the clusters hang thereon; to sail delightfully in calm and smooth sea; to be satisfied when he abounds with this worlds_ good; and contented when none oppose him and seek his hurt; to have a multitude of potent friends, and but a few impotent adversaries: for such a one to be patient argues not that he hath grace, but that he is in his fool_s paradise, settled upon the lees of carnal comforts according to his sensual wishes.

But let God strip him of these, his heart like Nabal_s will die within him; he hath lost his heaven, and drops down into his hell. When outward peace is taken away from a man, that he cannot turn himself to the right hand or to the left, but he beholds himself encompassed with troubles and black clouds of darkness; when all things run awkwardly and contrary to his carnal expectations; and he is frustrated and disappointed in all his attempts and designs; for a man then to bear up, argues him to be a gracious person, and one that hath resigned himself up to God and his conduct. And when he hath his outward supplies taken from him, and he is changed from a plentiful and prosperous to a poor and mean condition and estate in the world, and is constrained to be beholden to them that have been as his servants feeding at his table; now to be quiet, and not changed in his temper, although his condition be thus changed, argues truth of grace. Yea, when a man_s former friends are metamorphosed into adversaries; yea, intimate friends into open

enemies, and they that he laid in his bosom seek to tear out his heart, and ruin him in his name and reputation in the world; and when he has given them no provocation so to do, and he hath not a few but a multitude of enemies, and them potent and strong, having great advantages to injure him, and but a very few weak and impotent friends; who though they have a will, yet have not power and ability to help and support him; no not so much as skill and judgment to counsel and direct him in his extremities: I say, for such a one to endure all this quietly, without tossing or flinging in his spirit, argues him patient; and not only to have truth of grace, but strength of grace. Surely he that bears up against all these billows of opposition, trouble, and affliction, must be a growing Christian, and one that hath everlasting arms underneath to support; for when creature-comforts are taken from him he would sink, had he no refuge to fly into in this his distressed condition; such a one is like-minded with the prophet, Heb. 3:17, *Although the fig-tree shall not blossom, &c.*

The writer is not acquainted with the nature of the reproaches that had been cast upon the character of Mr. Keach; to the painful effects of which on his circumstances and his reputation he doubtless refers in the above extract. But when it is known that his venerable father was not shielded from the foul tongue of slander by his long life of useful labours, it will not much be wondered at that his son, who had been but a few years in the ministry and who had been previously to his conversion very profligate, should have been exposed to its venomous tooth.

Mr. Elias Keach appears to have been very popular and useful. About 130 persons united in church-fellowship within nine months after he began preaching at Curriers_-hall. He was one of the ministers who supplied the Lord_s-day morning lecture at Pinners_-hall, where he often had 1500 hearers. He published four sermons, delivered at that lecture, on Justification, besides the Treatise on Discipline, and the sermons on Patience.

The church appears to have been left in very afflicted circumstances. The conclusion of Mr. Wyles_s sermon is very striking: _I shall now conclude with Moses_ prayer. Numb. 27:16, 17. *Let the Lord, the God of the spirits of all flesh, set a man over the congregation, which may go out before them and which may go in before them, and which may lead them out, and which may bring them in; that the congregation of the Lord be not as sheep which have no shepherd._*

A good engraving of this minister is in the possession of Mr. Chapman Barber, of Chancery-lane, who married one of the descendants of the excellent Mr. Benjamin Keach.

Mr. John Nichols, it appears, succeeded Mr. Keach, but I know nothing further concerning him; the church, however, in 1703, was in connection with the regular churches.

In 1709, I find a Mr. Congrove mentioned as pastor of a church in Goodman_s-fields.

Some time before the year 1715 they had removed to a new meeting-house in Angel-alley: the place is mentioned in Maitland_s list in 1739, as belonging to the Baptists.

1715–49: Mr. Edward Ridgeway.

Mr. Edward Ridgeway was ordained over the church in Angel-alley, October 20, 1715; but I do not find any mention of him before the year 1718, when the church under his care raised fifty pounds, and became united with the Baptist Fund; Mr. Sky was introduced as a messenger by Mr. Ridgeway. His name is not with those who attended the Conference at Salters_-hall in 1719; but I find him associated with the Particular Baptist Ministers in 1723. The church appears to have been small, from the amount of the annual collection for the fund. Mr. Ridgeway was returned to the General Body, as an approved minister in 1727, 1732, and 1737. In 1749 he was reported to that body as deceased. His church ceased from belonging to the fund in 1729, and his name does not appear with those of the society of ministers at the Coffee-house after that time.

There was a Mr. John Ridgeway among the London ministers, in 1734, who was at that time a member of the Society at the Coffee-house. He was probably a son of Mr. Edward Ridgeway. I find also that in 1757 a hundred pounds were given to the Baptist Fund by a Rev. Mr. Ridgeway. As the former died in 1749, this in all likelihood was the latter person.

The place of worship at Ayle_s-street, was occupied by a Mr. Cudworth, who was Paedobaptist minister. He distinguished himself by writing in defence of the sentiments on faith contained in Mr. Hervey_s work, entitled, _Theron and Aspasio._

INDEX

ABBOTT, MORDECAI, Esq. Member of

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ERRATA

For victims, read nations, page, line1.

_alloweth,	_abhorreth,	_	_.
_praise,	_pain,	_	_, <i>note</i> .
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Bartlett and Hinton, Printers, Oxford.

VOLUME III.

BOOK. II.

1730: Churches at Shadwell and Prescott-street.

CHURCH AT SHADWELL.

THE place in St. Paul_s, Shadwell, was, I conjecture, built by the influence of Mr. Benjamin Keach, soon after the Revolution. It was one of the associated churches in 1704 and 1705, when Mr. NATHANIEL WYLES attended as its pastor, and Messrs. John Brand and Caleb Hooker as deacons. Mr. Wyles has been mentioned as publishing a funeral sermon for Mr. Elias Keach: I know nothing further about him nor of the church.

VOLUME III.

BOOK. II.

CHURCH IN PRESCOT-STREET.

1720 50: Mr. Samuel Wilson.

THE meeting-house is situated in Little Prescott-street, Goodman_s fields, and was erected in 1730, for the church formerly meeting in Old Gravel-lane, Wapping. It is a good building, with three galleries, and a commodious vestry, but without a baptistery, a thing uncommon in the present day. The church was separated from the first Particular Baptist church formed in London. Crosby says, _They were part of that ancient flourishing church which met in Broad-street, Wapping, who, with Mr. Samuel Wilson, who is now [1740*]

(* This is evidently a mistake. The meeting-house in Broad-street, in Maitland_s list, in 1739, was reckoned an Independent place: the Baptist church was in Johnson_s-street, Old Gravel-lane.)

the elder of the baptized church in Goodman_s fields, came off from them, and built that new meeting-house of which they are now possessed. The remaining part continued some years together; but labouring under many difficulties, were in the end necessitated to dissolve their church state.

It appears, however, that the major part of the church left with Mr. Wilson. Dr. Gill, in the funeral sermon preached for that excellent minister, addresses them as _the church, who, being destitute of a pastor, had called him to take the pastoral care over them._ Dr. Gill would not have thus addressed them, had they been the minority. Mr. Wilson settled with them about the year 1724, and continued at Wapping until they removed with him to Goodman_s-fields in 1730.

Mr. WILSON was descended from godly protestant Dissenting ministers, both by his father_s and mother_s side. It is not known who were his maternal progenitors. Mr. Ebenezer Wilson, pastor of the church in Walbrook, was his father and Mr. John Wilson, an eminent minister at Hitchin, in Hertfordshire, was his grandfather. He had received a religious and liberal education. His grammatical and classical learning was derived from the instructions of Dr. Hay, an eminent clergyman in London, and Professor Ward, of

Gresham College. His academical studies were prosecuted under the direction of Dr. Ridgely and Mr. Eames. He made a great proficiency in polite and useful literature; and being thus furnished, after engaging in the ministry, he became a shining and distinguished character both in the church and the world.

During his infancy and youth, he was favoured with many providential preservations and deliverances. He several times, when bathing, nearly escaped drowning, was exposed to imminent danger by the bloody flux, and was cut near the eye by a cat-stick. Accounts of these preservations, indicating the special care of Providence over him, he committed to writing, considering them as proofs of God's having saved him while in his unregenerate state, for the purpose of calling him, by his grace, to reveal his Son in him, and to put him into the ministry. He received his first serious impressions under the preaching of the Rev. Daniel Wilson, an eminent Presbyterian minister of Monkwell-street chapel.

In the funeral sermon which Mr. Wilson preached for Mr. Wilcox in Monkwell-street, May 20, 1733, and which he also published, he gives this account of his conversion:— 'It was here, in this place, among you, under the ministry of your late most useful and affectionate pastor, that I received (if my heart deceives me not) the first serious impressions. And for several years, with the greatest pleasure, and I trust some advantage, I made one of the throng who crowded after him.'

Mr. Wilson's father dying while he was young, he was placed under the care of persons who were Paedobaptists. After his conversion he began to consider the subject of baptism, and he says that no one could have entered upon it with a more earnest desire to find truth on the side of the common practice; that his connections and prospects led him strongly to incline to Paedobaptism; but that having collected all the scripture usually adduced upon that subject, and seriously considered their natural meaning, he was obliged to conclude that the balance of argument was greatly on the side of adult baptism by immersion. Being soon after baptized by Mr. Edward Wallin, he joined the church at Maze-pond, while he was pursuing his academical studies under Dr. Ward. He was now about twenty years of age, and when he left Gresham College, with the entire approbation of the members of the church he was called forth to the work of the ministry, and began preaching with great acceptance to the public.

About the year 1721, the Rev. John Noble, of Tallow-chandlers'-hall, having arrived at old age, and needing an assistant, Mr. Wilson accepted an invitation to that office. An evening lecture was established, where he preached to a crowded audience. 'He came forth,' says Dr. Gill, 'even at first, with clear evangelical light, with great warmth, zeal, and fervency of spirit and, like another Apollos, with a torrent of eloquence, being mighty in the Scriptures: all which things recommended him to all sorts of people, and made him exceedingly popular.'

It was about the year 1724, that he was invited to settle with the church in Old Gravel-lane, Wapping; and was ordained over them as their pastor. Mr. (afterwards Dr.) Gill, Mr. Edward Wallin, and many others, taking part in that solemn service. It is not said what was the cause of his leaving Wapping to settle in Prescott-street, and of the division which took place in the church. Some of the members objected to a new place of worship being erected, and were resolved rather to lose a faithful minister, than leave an old meeting-house. However it was, part only of the church accompanied him to Goodman's-fields. While Mr. James Foster was preaching his popular Socinian lectures, at the Old Jewry, in 1740, Mt. Samuel Wilson was preaching at Tallow-chandlers'-hall, on the west side of

Dowgate-street, a course of sermons from the same texts. It is said, some of his friends took turns to hear Mr. Foster, and would then inform Mr. Wilson how he treated his subject, when he would be sure to handle the same text the next Lord_s-day evening, exposing and confuting his errors. *

(* Private information.)

During the last twenty years of his life, the church, which was in a _low estate,_ at the opening of the new meeting-house, increased abundantly, and was very flourishing. His ministry was greatly owned to the conversion of many sinners, and to the comfort and edification of the whole church, both of those who survived him, *

(* Mr. William Taylor, the beneficent founder of the Baptist Academical Institution, at Stepney, in 1811, was one of the last persons whom Mr. Wilson baptized.)

and of many who went to glory before him. His popularity continued until the end of his life; and, notwithstanding several breaches had been made in the church, it was at the time of Mr. Wilson_s death, Oct. 6, 1750, in a very prosperous condition.

Mr. Wilson_s publications were—

1. A Scripture Manual: or a Plain Representation of the Ordinance of Baptism; designed for the use of all who would answer a good conscience towards God, and give a reason of their faith and practice with meekness and fear. This admirable tract was written not long before his death, thirty years after he had been baptized. It has been repeatedly printed, and within a few years past has been translated into French.—
2. A sermon occasioned by the Death of Mr. Edward Chamberlain, late Master of the Charity-school, Shakespeare_s-walk, preached to the Society who support it, March 19, 1732.—
3. God_s Compassion to an Ungrateful People; a Sermon preached at the Rev. Mr. Ridgeley_s Meeting-place, near Thames-street, April 6, 1732. This is dedicated to _Thomas Brumsall, Esq. one of his Majesty_s Justices of the Peace for the county of Bedford._—
4. A Sermon occasioned by the Death of the Rev. William Arnold, 1734, form Luke vii. 37—
5. A Sermon preached to the Societies for Reformation of Manners, at Salters_-hall, 1734, from Titus 2:11, 12—
6. The Blessing of a Gospel Ministry; a Sermon preached in Monkswell-street Meeting-place, May 20, 1733, occasioned by the Death of the Rev. Daniel Wilcox, from Acts 20:38—
7. A Sinner justified by the Righteousness of Christ; a Sermon preached at the Lord_s-day Evening Lecture, at Silver-street, August 14, 1743; published at the Request of the Young Gentlemen who support the Lecture—
8. A Sermon, addressed to the Church, preached at the Ordination of the Rev. George Bratithwaite, M.A. March 28, 1734. This was published at the request of several ministers, with Dr. Gill_s sermon on the same occasion, addressed to the ministers. The whole was entitled, _The Mutual Duty of Pastor and People._ These discourses had been previously preached, July 26, 1733, at the ordination of the Rev. William Morton, at Glass-house-street, Westminster. In the preface they say, that they had

preached the sermons a second time at the request of several persons, and had published them at their desire. _We are far,_ say they, _from designing by this to dictate to the ministers or churches; but it is certain there are duties incumbent on both, which are too much neglected in this day of degeneracy, in which the ministerial work is by many too slightly discharged, and the respect which ought to be paid by professors to the faithful labourers in Christ_s vineyard is too little attended to._

One extract from Mr. Wilson_s sermon may be considered as a specimen of his style and manner. It relates to the duty of the people, _to provide for their minister, according as God had blessed them, with cheerfulness and generosity._—Ministers are such who have had what the world calls a regular education; that is, have been brought up from their childhood at school, and have spent a proper time at the academy or university, the better to fit, prepare, and qualify them to teach and instruct others: or, they are persons who being taken notice of by the church as eminent for grace and gifts, are by them desired to quit their secular employments, and to give themselves wholly to study, reading, prayer, and preaching the word. As to the former, I mean a learned ministry, to me it is more than probable, had the same time, care, and diligence, which ministers are obliged to employ in, the painful pursuit of theological studies, been laid out about law, physic, merchandize, or any other gainful calling; they had been as likely, under a common blessing, to have gained reputation, and to have made, or enlarged their fortunes, as the rest of mankind. For a proof of this, let it be remembered, we have seen in our day, gentlemen of the first character, who have shone at the bar and on the bench, and adorned the college, who had spent several years in the study of divinity, and who were not only designed for, but some of them, for a time, have appeared in the pulpit as preachers of the gospel.

_If some then, from a zeal for God_s honour, and a hearty concern for the welfare of immortal souls, are willing to deny themselves, and forego the advantages which they might otherwise expect, in common with the rest of mankind, how unreasonable and disingenuous is it, that the very persons for whom they are acting thus, should think much of allowing them all due and proper encouragement! And as to such who leave their secular callings, as it is, or ought to be, by the advice and desire of the church, so when that is the case, it becomes unrighteous, as well as ungrateful, not to allow them a competency for the maintenance and support of their families._

After Mr. Wilson_s death, a volume of his sermons, on various subjects and occasions, was published; two of which, entitled, _Of efficacious Grace,_ were published in his life time; the rest were taken from his manuscripts. These amount to eighteen, and were prepared for the press by the Rev. Dr. Joseph Stennett, of Little Wild-street.

Mr. Wilson_s funeral oration was delivered by the Rev. Dr. Stennett, in the burial-ground at Bunhill-fields, Oct.12, 1750. From this eloquent address we select the following as descriptive of the character of Mr. Wilson.

_The reverend and excellent person whose grave we surround, was descended from a line of ancestors, both on his father_s and his mother_s side, among whom were several very worthy ministers of the gospel. He had so happy a texture of mind, such fine natural parts, and was so very early imbued with remarkable evidences of a divine work upon his soul, as led his religious friends, in his tender years, to hope that heaven had pointed him out for the service of the sanctuary; and time soon made it appear that they were not mistaken.

_Prepared with suitable study, adorned with useful literature, stocked with spiritual experience, warmed with zeal for God, and love to the souls of men, and richly furnished with the unction from above, he came forth into his sacred work; and approved himself an able teacher of others, at a time of life, when but few enter upon a public profession of religion themselves. He was favoured with an healthful constitution; a constitution which was hardly ever much shaken with any disease, till that which brought him hither. His industry was suited to it. And such was the sweetness and benevolence of his temper, that, as it readily engaged him in offices of kindness to others, though frequently attended with much labour and fatigue to himself; so it seldom suffered him to be ruffled with resentment at any ungrateful treatment he met with in return. With all these happy talents, he soon became a very popular and successful preacher. And that this popularity was not the effect of novelty, and superficial attainments, appears, in that it was not only the blaze of a few months or a year, as is often the case, but it continued with him through the whole course of his ministry; so that, by the blessing of God on his labours, he raised a congregation from low circumstances, to become one of the most flourishing in this city. And he discharged his pastoral office with that seriousness, prudence, and temper, as was attended with such a series of increase and harmony, as few communities have, for so long a time, enjoyed.

_But neither honourable descent, neither genius, nor learning, neither the ornaments of nature, nor of grace, neither love to God, nor love to men, nor faith, nor usefulness will, we see, secure the continuance of men here beyond the limits of the divine decree. Not the art of medicine, nor the aching hearts of kindred and of friends, not the tears and groans of a large and beloved flock, nor the fervent prayers of fellow-labourers in the same service, can respite the commission, when the hour is come; for it is the just and reasonable appointment of the great Disposer of all things, that man should die; and there is no discharge in this war.

What makes the stroke the more feeling, is that he is removed from us at a time, when the growth of the most destructive errors, the increase of every kind of wickedness, and the sad and general decays of vital religion among good men themselves, seem to render the continuance of persons of remarkable piety and abilities, of very great consequence to the best interest in the world. And it is still the more affecting; that he bowed his head in the midst of his strength, and when a large treasure of experience, and great ripeness of judgment, gave us encouraging hopes of his growing usefulness, for many years to come; and that his life also should, at such a time as this, become a sacrifice to the zeal of his heart, and the fatigues of his work. These are some of the mysteries of providence, which though we understand not now, will be unfolded hereafter.

The Rev. Dr. John Gill preached and published his funeral sermon, founded upon Acts 20:38; the same text which Mr. Wilson himself had improved about seven years before, at the funeral of the Rev. Daniel Wilcox. It is very apparent that Dr. Gill felt a great respect and affection for Mr. Wilson. He says, _To give you the character of my deceased brother, and your pastor, I want the eloquence of the deceased to paint him out in his proper colours, and to describe him as the accomplished man, the real Christian, and the excellent minister.–His natural parts were very quick and strong; he had a great vivacity of spirit, a lively fancy and imagination, a retentive memory, a penetrating mind, and a solid judgment; which, with the advantages of literature, and, above all, the grace of God bestowed upon him, and spiritual light, and knowledge given him in the mysteries of the gospel, made him the great man he was. That he was truly a partaker of the grace of God, was not only the judgment of the church to whom he first gave up himself, but will easily be admitted by all good men that have know him, heard him, or read his works. And it was your happiness as a church, that you had such a minister, who himself had tasted that the Lord was gracious. An unregenerate ministry has been the bane of the established church, and is like to be the ruin of the protestant dissenting interest.

_Need I describe him as a preacher to you, who at least many of you, have so long sat under his ministry?– His mien and deportment in the pulpit were grave and venerable; his gesture graceful; his address very moving and pathetic; his language striking; his discourses spiritual, savoury, and evangelical; having a tendency to awaken the minds of sinners to a sense of sin and danger, and to relieve and comfort distressed minds: he was indeed an eloquent preacher, and a warm defender of the peculiar doctrines of the Christian religion; and in one word, laborious, indefatigable, and successful; not a loiterer, but a labourer in the Lord_s vineyard; as in his public work, so in the more private duties of his office, visiting the church and members of it, without respect of persons; fervent in his prayers for them, and with them; hearty in his advice unto them, and unwearied in doing any service for them he undertook, and let me not forget his conduct at your church-meetings, where he presided, becoming his character and office; what authority he used when necessary; what prudence in all things; what patience in bearing with the infirmities of the weak, and it may be sometimes the rudeness of some, and the invectives of others; what lenity to offenders; what compassion to backsliders; what reluctance to pass the awful sentence on the incorrigible, and with what tears in prayer he would weep over such unhappy professors!

_His gift in prayer was very remarkable and extraordinary; with what fullness of matter, freedom of mind, and fervour of spirit, as well as pertinency of expression, and propriety of language, would he pour out his soul before God, and wrestle with him; what a compass would he fetch, and reach every case, both private and public; and not only express the sense of his own heart, but that of others that joined with him, in a better and fuller manner, than they could do it for themselves.

He was affable and courteous in his behaviour to all men, of a cheerful spirit, his conversation pleasant, profitable, entertaining, and useful; which made him generally beloved by all sorts of persons. In social life, he was the tender husband, the affectionate father, and the faithful friend.

This eminently distinguished minister was cut off in the midst of his days, as he had not completed his forty-eighth year when his Master and Lord said unto him, *Give an account of thy stewardship, for thou mayest be no longer steward.* The state of his mind in this last illness is thus described by Dr. Gill:—

—He was seized at first with such a stupor as rendered him very little conversible during the whole time; so that nothing of his gracious experience could be taken from him, only some broken words and expressions now and then were dropped by him, which shewed him to be in a spiritual frame: but from a small manuscript, written by him in health, I shall give a few extracts, in which he not only expresses his sense of mercies, temporal and spiritual, but observes the gracious dealings of God with him, and his experience of his divine favour. —I have had,— says he, —many sweet visits of his love, especially in secret, and at his table. God, in Christ,— adds he, —I hope is my portion, his providence my defence, and his good Spirit my guide and comforter.— And in another place, he expresses his sense of the corruption of his heart, the infirmities of his life, his faith and hope in a bleeding Saviour, and his desires after unspotted purity and holiness; he complains of —a polluted, proud, peevish heart, prone to atheism, folly, and every evil;— and of a life tarnished with many blemishes, sad indiscretions, and heart-breaking ingratitude:—surely, —says he, —God hath hardly done more for any, nor any left to do more against him!— then expresses a hope limited to a bleeding Mediator,— and concludes, —Blessed day, that will bring perfect purity!— Which day is come to him, and has brought it to him.—

There is a good portrait of Mr. Wilson prefixed to his sermons. Another was published in the Baptist Magazine, copied from the above.

This church was indeed a prosperous vine during the period of Mr. Wilson's ministry, *a fruitful bough, a fruitful bough by a well, whose branches run over the wall.* His labours were the honoured means of training up many, and some of them eminent men, for the ministry in our churches. The following is a list of those who were called out to the public ministry, by the church in Prescott-street, while Mr. Wilson was its pastor.—John Haden, 1736.—Benjamin Beddome, 1740, the excellent pastor of Bourton-upon-the-water.— Meredith Townsend, 1741: he became a P do baptist in 1743, and was chosen assistant to Mr. Price, successor to Dr. Watts in Bury-street.—William Coombs, 1741, co-pastor with Mr. David Rees, of Limehouse.—John Needham, 1745, pastor of the church at Hitchin, Herts.—Josiah Thompson, 1745, after Mr. Wilson's death pastor of the church in Unicorn-yard.— Mr. (afterwards Dr.) Llewellyn, 1747, a very learned man, and a treasurer of the Baptist Fund.—Abraham Clark, 1754.—Samuel James, 1754, pastor of the church at Hitchin, author of —Remarkable Experiences,— &c.

1750–55: Church in Prescott-street.

The church in Prescott-street was destitute for upwards of four years. It was difficult to find a suitable pastor, as it is often in our churches, especially after the decease or removal of a minister who has been greatly esteemed. The first minister they thought of

was Mr. John Tommas, afterwards the worthy pastor of the church in the Pithay, Bristol. He had preached at Prescott-street on the morning of the Lord's day that Dr. Gill preached the funeral sermon for Mr. Wilson in the afternoon. His subject was Rev. 1:18.—*I am he that liveth, and was dead; and behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death.* Many of the people appear to have been desirous that he should have been invited to preach upon probation; but there were others who thought him not sufficiently fitted and accomplished to succeed their late pastor. Mr. Benjamin Beddome, jun. who was pastor of the church at Bourton-upon-the-water, was very strongly solicited by the deacons to supply the congregation with a view to the pastoral office. The people seem to have been unanimous respecting him as a suitable person, provided the church at Bourton would agree to part with him; but that consent could not be obtained, and Mr. Beddome would not act without it. Mr. Hugh Evans, at that time an assistant to Mr. Bernard Foskett, was invited at the request of the whole church, and he was inclined to comply; but the death of his wife just at the time, and his not being willing to remove with a small family, prevented him. After this Mr. Tommas came to London about business, and preached at Maze-pond and Little Wildstreet; and this led to a wish, on the part of a majority of the members of Prescott-street church, that he might be invited for three months; but the deacons refused to write a letter of invitation. The people, however, sent a letter; but the want of unanimity was so evident, that Mr. Tommas would not attend to it; but immediately after accepted an invitation from the church at the Pithay. Mr. Reynolds, who afterwards settled at Cripplegate, preached six weeks upon probation. All the ministers above mentioned were very distinguished men for talents and usefulness, and spent their lives usefully in the stations from which there had been such attempts made to remove them. *There are many devices in a man's heart; nevertheless the counsel of the Lord, that shall stand,* Prov. xix. 21. *O Lord, I know that the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps,* Jer. x. 23.

About Christmas, 1752, a Mr. James Fall, jun. son of Mr. Fall, pastor of the Baptist church at Watford, and who had been called to preach by Dr. Gill's church in 1752, was invited to preach among them; and after supplying the church about five months, he was invited unanimously to preach for six months as a probationer for the pastoral office. At the expiration of that time, it was proposed, at a church meeting, that the sense of the church should be taken, whether Mr. Fall should be called to the pastoral office, when it appeared there was a small majority for the measure. Four messengers were appointed to know if Mr. Fall would accept the office; upon which he desired time to consider before he gave his reply. The next Lord's-day, when this answer was reported, and it was proposed that Mr. Fall should continue to preach till he had given his reply, one of the deacons said, _that he never should preach again in that pulpit_; and another said, _that as the people had chosen Mr. Fall, they might take him and keep him, but the place was theirs;_ adding, that _he hoped the Lord would bless them._

The above, in reference to Mr. Fall, is extracted from the account of proceedings read afterwards, at the settlement of Mr. Fall over those who had chosen him to be the pastor of the church, by _Captain Thomas Best,_ who is styled _one of their worthy deacons._ This was the origin of the church in Little Alie-street.

The Society of Ministers took part with the people who remained in Prescott-street, and refused to give any countenance to those who had separated themselves from the church. Their reasons for this do not appear; but I conjecture, as there was nothing against the character of Mr. Fall, that they were of opinion he had not sufficient talents to support the character and respectability of the congregation at Prescott-street, and that he had acted wrong in accepting the invitation, when the majority was so small, and the minority opposed to him so powerful in their influence. It was doubtless a choice of difficulties; and as Dr. Gill was the pastor of Mr. Fall, it is not likely he would have taken so decided a part against him and his adherents, had he not been influenced by strong reasons. Instances of this kind are to be deeply lamented; but in some cases, the constitution of our churches and congregations prove, if not the cause, yet the painful occasion of them.

1755–68: Mr. Samuel Burford.

Mr. SAMUEL BURFORD, who was the pastor of the church at Lyme, was now invited to supply, and on August 12, 1755, the ministers were informed by the deacons, Messrs. Manypenny, Morse, Laurance, and Fisher, that the church had agreed to choose Mr. Burford as their pastor, and were requested to assist at his ordination at the meeting in Goodman_s-fields, on the fourth day of September ensuing. Mr. Edward Wallin preached on this occasion, and published the sermon.

Mr. Burford appears to have spent some time in study, with a view to the work of the ministry, and became a very reputable and useful pastor of the church. He was born at Lyme, and when about eighteen or nineteen years of age, he was baptized, and became a member of the church in that town; and having been called to the ministry, he was settled as their pastor about the year 1749. At the time of Mr. Wilson_s death, and for several years afterwards, he was conducting business in Lyme, in connection with preaching to the church, who could not enable him to support his family without laboring with his hands. The general approbation expressed towards him for the usefulness of his labours and his respectable talents, pointed him out to the people at Prescott-street.

Mr. Burford filled up the important station into which the providence of God had brought him with great reputation, comfort, and success. Being a man of strong natural parts, a lively imagination, a retentive memory, an agreeable voice, and a pleasing elocution, his ministry was well attended, and the church greatly increased. Though he accepted the office with great diffidence, yet, having accepted it, he applied himself to the duties of his office with assiduity and zeal. He possessed great humility of mind, and a sweetness and affability of temper which rendered him accessible to persons in the meanest station. He was distinguished for Christian candour and modesty, so that these dispositions evidently possessed his heart, governed his conduct, and put life into his public ministrations.

In his pulpit exercises, especially when engaged in public prayer, he discovered much spirituality of sentiment, fluency of language, and fervour of soul. His natural abilities, which were good, were improved by application, so that his popularity gradually increased. His knowledge of divine truth was considerable, and he explained the doctrines of grace in an experimental manner, whilst he urged the duties of religion by

the most evangelical motives. With affection and faithfulness he addressed the hearts and consciences of saints and sinners; and a divine blessing attended his ministry, so that he was indeed a very acceptable and very useful minister of Jesus Christ. God highly honoured this faithful man, by giving him many seals to his ministry. He was not only acceptable when in the pulpit, but agreeable when out of it, manifesting sincere affection towards all the church, weeping with those that wept, and rejoicing with those that rejoiced. His usefulness in the building up of the church, by many additions being made to it, united with the general excellency of his character, and his amiable disposition, procured for him in return, warm expressions of regard and love from the church towards him.

Sometime before his death, Mr. Burford undertook the afternoon service on the Saturday to the congregation of Sabbatarian Baptists, meeting at Curriers_-hall; but in the midst of all these useful labours, his work was very suddenly finished, and his course quickly ended. He had laboured at Prescott-street thirteen years only, and had preached on the Lord_s day, April 10, 1768; but before another Sabbath had revolved, his eyes were closed in death, and this good and faithful servant entered into the joy of his Lord. Thus, in a few days, sickness and death pulled down a constitution which had the appearance of health and vigour; and so rapid and secret was the progress of the disease, that the foundation of the house was undermined and nearly destroyed, before the danger of its fall was well apprehended.

_During this short time he felt great pain, which he nevertheless bore with becoming patience and fortitude. It was his desire, for the sake of his family and his people, if it were the will of God, that he might still live: and with some degree of earnestness he prayed for a blessing on the means used to that end; adding, _That God was yet able to raise him up._ But it was otherwise determined. On the day preceding his death, a veil was drawn over his mind; so that he had discouraging doubts and temptations to contend with, as well as the pains of his increasing disease. _He feared,_ he said, _that God was dealing with him in wrath, and that he was an unprofitable servant;_ adding, _that he could not now see that God had made a covenant with him, as he formerly thought he had made covenant with him, as he formerly thought he had seen._ But on the following day, the day of his dissolution, the cloud dispersed; and there succeeded to it a happy composure and tranquility of mind. _He saw,_ as he expressed it, _that God had loved him with an everlasting love, and that he was now with loving-kindness drawing him to himself._ And with pleasure he repeated those words of the Psalmist,–*This poor man cried, and the Lord heard him, and saved him out of all his troubles. The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them. O taste and see that the Lord is good: blessed is the man that trusteth in him,* Ps. 34:6, 7, 8. Death now approached him; and perceiving his departure at hand, he said to those around him, _My people are dear to me, and I believe they love me. My family, and wife, and all, I must leave in the hands of God. I am going to the arms of Jesus;– and so he expired. Thus lived, and thus died, this amiable and worthy man, this sincere Christian and faithful servant of God._

His remains were interred in Bunhill-fields burial ground, and Mr. Clark, of Unicorn-yard, delivered an oration at his grave. The speaker designates the deceased as _an able, faithful, zealous, useful, and humble servant of Jesus;_ and speaks of his distinguished talents for usefulness, and growing success of his youth, and vigour, and fervour, and zeal in his Master_s service, when he was called away from a large and increasing community.

His funeral sermon was preached at Prescot-street, April 24, 1768, by Dr. Samuel Stennett. This sermon, which was published at the request of the church, and for the benefit of the family, was founded upon John 20:16;—*Then said Thomas, Let us also go, that we may die with him.* In speaking of Mr. Burford, Dr. Stennett says, *_The memory of the just is blessed:* and there seems special occasion for taking some notice of the characters, tempers, and conduct of such, who, by reason of their stations in life, have been more generally known than others; and who, by the grace of God, have been enabled to discharge themselves worthily, in the important and painful work of the Christian ministry. It is a tribute we owe to their memory, and which we should be the rather inclined to pay, as thereby somewhat may be contributed to our own comfort and edification._

After having mentioned many of the peculiar excellencies of the deceased, the Doctor adds, *_Need I put you in mind, my friends, of the proofs he gave of his ardent concern, not for your temporal prosperity only, but most of all for your spiritual and everlasting welfare? – How faithfully he dispensed the word of truth among you, by the terrors of the Lord persuading the stupid thoughtless sinner, and by the mercy and grace of the gospel encouraging the sincere and humble inquirer? _ How he instructed the ignorant, and warned the presumptuous? _ How he exhorted, and comforted, and charged every one of you, as a father doth his children, that ye would walk worthy of God, who hath called you unto his kingdom and glory? Need I remind you, with what fluency, affection, and fervour, he usually poured out his prayers to God among you and for you? Or need I tell you, how he exemplified the doctrine he preached, so far as consists with human frailty, in the general course of his life, conducting the affairs of his family with prudence and frugality, attending diligently and regularly on the duties of his public ministry, and carrying himself, in all his familiar intercourses at your houses, with seriousness and cheerfulness? Ye are his witnesses, I think I may say, how holily, and justly, and unblameably he behaved himself among you.*

_But he is now no more—no more as to this world. Mysterious providence! We are sure it is right, but we know not how to explain it. A great variety of circumstances would have led us to apprehend, that his continuance among us, which was the voice of nature, and the earnest wish of his friends, might also be the will of Providence. But God_s thoughts are not our thoughts, nor his ways our ways. The divine purpose was not to be altered. Neither early life, nor growing usefulness, nor the tears of a numerous family, nor the prayers of his Christian friends, such of them as apprehended his danger, nor the aid of skilful physicians, could prevail to get the sentence that was gone forth reversed, or even postponed. Death made his advances upon him suddenly, giving either us or him but little notice of his approach.

Mr. Burford left widow and a large family of young and helpless children. It appears that the friends of Mr. Burford, persons of that church which he had so faithfully served, and so greatly increased, and some of the other churches, came forward generously and compassionately, and entered into measures for their relief and support.

Mr. Burford had the pleasure, to his no small comfort, before his death, to introduce one of his sons to join the church in Prescott-street. One of his daughters, a member of that church, is still living.

The church is still large and flourishing. The Baptist Fund has derived very considerable assistance from it. It is now under the care of Mr. Thomas Griffin.

VOLUME III.

BOOK. II.

1754–56: Church at Little Alie-street.

CHURCH AT LITTLE ALIE-STREET.

THE meeting-house which was built here by Mr. James Fall and his friends, is a good-sized building, capable of holding about five hundred persons, with a convenient vestry.

The circumstances which led to the formation of this church have been narrated in the last article. To have Mr. Fall as their pastor, was a privilege which they who had voted for him could not be deprived of; but they could scarcely expect that those who disapproved his ministry, especially when they happened to be the deacons and the trustees of the meeting-house, would agree to surrender up the place to them, who though a majority in point of numbers, were probably unable to support the minister. It should be considered too, that the congregation usually adhere to the meeting-house, however the members of the church decided in the choice of a new minister: and in this case it is evident that they took the side of the trustees, who were also supported in their conduct by the church in Carter-lane, of which Mr. Fall was a member, and the Society of Ministers, to which he belonged. It is not probable this would have been the case, had it not been thought that Mr. Fall was an unsuitable person to fill the office of pastor and to keep up the congregation. It appears, however, that the Prescott-street people treated the separatists with great severity. The latter say, _We sent messengers to treat with them for an amicable separation, that so we might acknowledge each other a church of Christ; withal desiring the blessing and presence of God might be with them, as we hoped it would be with us. To which they returned this answer, _That if we would come and acknowledge we had rent ourselves from the church, and ask them for a dismissal, they would not only grant us this, but own us as a sister church; but otherwise should deem us a disorderly set of people._ This acknowledgement we could not make consistently with the principles of independency which we profess, and hope ever to maintain. We were willing to seek for peace, and pursue it; but we could not sacrifice truth, nor renounce our dependency upon Christ, to obtain it, _ *

(*The account of the church in Little Alie-street, p.27 an Appendix to the *Ordination Discourses*, by James Fall, of Watford, 1754.)

Admitting the correctness of the statement, that a majority of the members chose Mr. Fall, it was certainly manifesting a total disregard to the principles of our churches, for the minority to demand from them and acknowledgement at variance with those principles, and to consider those as a _disorderly people,_ who, if they would have submitted to the degradation proposed, might have been recognized by the same persons as _a sister church._ The writer feels persuaded that the apostle James would have included such a circumstance in his cutting censure,—*My brethren, these things ought not so to be.*

1754–56: Mr. James Fall.

Mr. JAMES FALL was ordained over those who had formed themselves into a new church, on March 28, 1754, in the Independent meeting-house in Crispin-street, Spital-fields. His worthy father, Mr. James Fall, pastor of the church at Watford, conducted the service. This he afterwards published. It contains _the Preamble to the Work of the Day;_ a Charge founded upon Zech. 11:4. _ Thus saith the Lord, my God; feed the flock of the slaughter; and the account of the proceedings of the church, which was read by _one of their deacons, that worthy, pious gentleman, Captain Thomas Best._ Mr. Fall says, _ I doubt not but I shall be blamed by some for being concerned in this work; but I am firmly persuaded I have espoused a righteous cause, and which will be owned by a righteous God, who will, I cannot but believe, highly honour them with his presence and blessing. Nor am I yet convinced that my son, or the church he is now the pastor of have acted contrary to the rule of Christ_s word, or the order of his house._

Mr. Amos Harrison, of Croydon, united with Mr. Fall in the ordination of the pastor and deacons, Messrs. Best, Morgan, and Woodfield. – _The new meeting-house in Little Alie-street was opened June 26, 1754. The Rev. James Fall, of Watford, engaged in prayer, and the Rev. James Fall, jun. prayed, and preached a sermon suitable for the occasion._

Mr. Fall_s life was short and tumultuous. He died Oct. 1756. Mr. Potts preached his funeral sermon, and was requested to publish it, which he engaged to comply with. He was succeeded by Mr. William Dowars, whose preaching reduced the congregation almost to nothing. It is now a large and flourishing church under the care of Mr. William Shenstone.

VOLUME III.

BOOK. II.

1691–1760: Church in Little Wild-street.

CHURCH IN LITTLE WILD-STREET

THE meeting-house first occupied by the church here was originally a Roman Catholic chapel, built not long before the Revolution in 1688, but had been unoccupied from the time James II. abdicated his crown, and, as the French minister said, _sold his three kingdoms for a mitre!_

This chapel was erected probably by the Spanish ambassador, who occupied part of a large mansion called _Weld House,_ from its having been the property of Humphrey Weld, Esq. of Lulworth Castle, Dorsetshire. This ambassador was Don Pedro Ronquillo, who had built this _Cause Room,_ or chapel, in his garden. When King James II. left the kingdom, the principal papists about the court, having conveyed all their valuable effects to this place, thinking, perhaps, they would there be preserved in safety, Don Pedro was very ill treated by the populace, who, incensed against popery, stripped his house of the furniture, library, plate, &c. The ambassador afterwards received from the government seventeen hundred pounds for this loss. In 1695 Weld House was pulled down, and fourteen brick houses erected on its site. *

(* *History of the Revolutions in England under the Stuart Family*, by F.J. D_Orleans,– *Rapin_s History of England*.– *Buckingham_s Account of the Revolution*.)

This chapel was an oblong building, with three galleries, capable of containing about five hundred people: the pulpit stood against the west wall. It was pulled down about thirty years since, and the present place, which is a large, elegant, circular building, was erected in its stead: it was enlarged, in 1817, by the addition of an end gallery. The former gallery, of only two seats deep, went round about three parts of the building. It will now contain about six hundred persons.

1691–1712: Mr. John Piggott.

The church in this place was founded by that eminent minister, Mr. JOHN PIGGOTT. He was originally a member of the church in Rupert-street, Goodman_s-fields, at which time he was employed in keeping a school for his support.

This was one of the five churches founded upon the six principles in Heb. 6:2, which on the 15th of Nov. 1691, agreed to found another church in John_s-court, Hart-street, Covent-garden. Mr. Piggott left Rupert-street, to settle in John_s-court, in 1691, and in that year I find the church in Petty France agreeing to dismiss a young woman named Taylor to brother Piggott_s.

Mr. Piggott_s intimacy with Mr. Joseph Stennett, and with that extraordinary scholar Mr. William Collins, accounts for the extent of his own learning, and his eminent qualifications as minister of Christ.

In the funeral sermon preached by Mr. Piggott, Nov. 15, 1702, for Mr. William Collins, he gives the following statement respecting himself, and the advantages he had derived from the instructions of that valuable and learned man. __His lips,__ says Mr. Piggott, __did dispense knowledge. He was very communicative, and ready to instruct those he conversed with. And I must ever own, to the honour of his memory, that he acted towards me, not only like a friend, but a father, both in directing and encouraging me in my studies. He has often cleared up that to my understanding which before was perplexed and obscure. He has prayed with me, and comforted me; but he is absent: oh, how do I miss my guide and my friend! __ What is the Lord a doing! What removes has he made! How can we forbear to cry out, *O the chariots of Israel, and the horsemen thereof!*__

The churches who maintained the __six foundation principles in Heb. 6:2. __had many among them who were strict and rigid Arminians, and who therefore could not bear it when any of their ministers preached the doctrine of particular redemption.

This was the case respecting Mr. Piggott. After he had for more than seven years been pastor of the church in Hart-street, Covent-garden, in 1699, a difference of opinion existed between the pastor and some of the people; respecting __personal election and final perseverance;__ and this led to some fierce debates. Mr. Piggott was requested by the church to be as __inoffensive in his preaching as he could on those points of controversy, and that he would desire those ministers that preached for him to be as inoffensive as they could,__ &c. to this request we have the pastor's written reply:—

__I promise to preach (as God shall assist me) as inoffensively as I can with a good conscience, in relation to personal election, particular redemption, and final perseverance. Witness my hand,

JOHN PIGGOTT.__

The ministry of Mr. Piggott being purely Calvinistic, the disputes at length arose so high, that a majority of the church resolved to look out for another meeting-house. During these debates, I find that on May 8, 1700, those excellent ministers, Messrs. William Collins, Richard Adams, and Joseph Stennett, were present, to advise and assist them. But all was vain: they found *the beginning of strife was like the letting out of water!* This example should operate as a warning against every attempt to preserve church fellowship among those Christians who differ in opinion on such important doctrines as __personal election, particular redemption, and final perseverance.__ If those who compose a church be not perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment upon such subjects as these, it is not possible they can or will *endeavor to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.*

1713–15: Mr. Thomas Ely, and Mr. Caleb Jope.

Mr. Piggott and his people having now removed to Little Wild [Weld] Street, they agreed, at a monthly church meeting, Jan. 15, 1700–1, __to set apart a day of solemn fasting and prayer, for the blessing of God upon the ministry of the church, and that God would add daily to their church number such as shall be saved.__ This meeting, according

to the good custom of those better days (in this respect) in our churches, was to commence at nine o'clock in the morning; the services of prayer, and an address from the pastor were generally continued till about three o'clock in the afternoon. It is affecting that services so suitable for humbling ourselves before God, and acknowledging our dependence upon him for the supplies of his Spirit, should have been suffered to drop in to disuse! The reduced situation of many of our churches is probably the direct effect of this spirit of lukewarmness; and the circumstances of most of them where but little comparatively of the power of primitive godliness is felt prove the necessity of restoring so Christian and commendable a practice.

That truly great man, Mr. John Piggott, continued his ministry with great reputation and success until prevented by illness. The last church meeting he attended was in July, 1712, and in March, 1713, he was called to his rest and his reward. For further particulars concerning him, and for the letter he sent to his afflicted church, just before his death, see vol. ii. p. 451.

After Mr. Piggott's death, a disturbance arose in the church on account of Mr. Thomas Ely. He was invited by the church, Sept. 30, 1713, to supply them for a month; and the invitation was repeated, until a report was brought of some inconsistencies in his conduct: one was, that he had stood godfather by proxy to Mr. Brown's child; which, in a Baptist minister, was certainly most ludicrous and inconsistent. Mr. Ely being rejected by the church, removed to Glass-house-street, Swallow-street.

In Sept. 1714, Mr. CALEB JOPE, who had been minister of Broadmead church, Bristol, and an assistant in the academy, was invited to preach here; and on Oct. 24, 1714, he was elected pastor of the church: this, however, was much disapproved by some leading members in the minority, and it is probable Mr. Jope was advised not to accept the invitation. *

(* Mr. Jope sunk into great obscurity, if not into circumstances of disgrace, at the latter part of his life. Some further account will be given of him in the next volume, under the article. Church at Ringwood.)

1715-29: Mr. Thomas Harrison.

The next pastor of the church was Mr. THOMAS HARRISON: This young minister was a son of Mr. Thomas Harrison, of Lorimers-hall, and a member of the church under the care of Mr. Joseph Maisters, at Joiners-hall; by which church, it should seem he had been called to the ministry. He was first invited to preach at Little Wild-street, April 14, 1714; but on Mr. Jope, from Bristol, coming among them, he was desired to decline his services. After Mr. Jope had refused to accept the pastoral office, Mr. Harrison was called to it, and complied with the invitation, March 23, 1714-15.

It should seem that many of the members objected to this choice, as I find that the deacons of the church were desired to confer with Mr. Harrison about accommodating those friends who are uneasy; and that if it be suitable to him to have him ordained on Easter Monday; and that the time be delayed no longer, if God permit. Soon after this settlement, many of the former members, who had left the church with Mr. Thomas, Ely, returned, and on their profession of sorrow for their improper and disorderly conduct, were again received into the communion of the church.

Mr. Harrison appears to have fulfilled the duties of his station for about fourteen years, to the satisfaction of the church. But in January, 1729 we find him complaining that the state of his health would not admit of his preaching twice a day, and desiring to be relieved from preaching in the morning of the Lord's day. The church accordingly agreed to provide him assistance without reducing his salary on that account. But they had soon reason to suspect that this was part of a plan of their unworthy pastor to conform to the Church of England, and that he spent his mornings of a Lord's day in attending the worship of the Establishment. There was a report soon in circulation, that Mr. Harrison was going to Tunbridge, and would come up to London in canonical robes. While Mr. Harrison was at this fashionable watering-place, with the family of Mr. Lewis Way, of Greenwich, *

(* Mr. Lewis Way appears to have been a subscriber to the congregation in Wild-street; as the church, in their letter to Mr. Harrison in 1729, call him their generous benefactor. At a church meeting, Dec. 10, 1732, I find these resolutions, in which it appears that Mr. Way was still connected with them:— Agreed, that it is the desire of this church to have the Test and Corporation Acts removed:— that proper application be made to parliament, if it shall appear to be a proper season:— A report being made that Mr. Way is willing to represent the congregation that usually meets in this place,— agreed, that he, as a subscriber, be appointed, &c.

Mr. Way appears to have been exceedingly friendly to Mr. Harrison, and I should conclude, that though that gentleman had not wholly separated himself from the Dissenters, he was strongly inclined to the Church of England. My reason for this is, when it was mentioned that Mr. Harrison was going to Tunbridge Wells with the good family at Greenwich, it was replied by one of the members of Wild-street, I wish they don't turn him quite over. Mr. Harrison, however, declared afterwards, that Mr. Way's family knew nothing of his intentions.)

a correspondence took place between the deacons of the church and their pastor on the subject, which is preserved, and which, as also his replies to some interrogations from the members, presents an affecting instance of versatility, if not of cunning and duplicity. In Fogg's Journal of the 10th of July, was this paragraph:— We hear that a very pious congregation in Little Wild-street, called by the name of Anabaptists, are in a deep concern for the loss of their pastor, who has lately eloped from them, and has very wickedly gone over to the Church of England! This sarcasm reminds us of the good English proverb, Many a true word spoken in jest! It certainly looks as if wickedness was the cause, when we find, that after all Mr. Harrison's statements, that he had been long searching for truth, and telling the church that their dissensions at first led him to think of becoming a conformist, that he yet says, in a letter of July 19.

I shall, if I have life and health, be with you, as I proposed, the first Lord's day of August, when I hope to meet you with cordial affection on your part, as I have done nothing to forfeit it answerable to that love on mine; which, had I thought it needful to leave you, would have rendered the separation not a little painful. That we may, amidst all the changes of life, glorify God with alacrity, and have the sweet prelibations of glory till we shall enter into it, will be the earnest prayer, and constant endeavour, of your affectionate pastor.

THOMAS HARRISON_

In the reply of the church to this effusion, dated July 27, they thank this gentleman, _that amidst his searches and inquiries, he still acknowledged them to be *a church of Christ*._ They indignantly repel the charge of dissensions which he had insinuated against them; and conclude by saying,

_We are not conscious to ourselves, as a church, that we have given you just cause to withdraw your affections from us, and to turn your thoughts towards conformity. We have lately, at your first request, (without lessening your income,) indulged you with a morning assistant, out of a tender regard to your bodily infirmities, being then unacquainted with your secret intentions. We cannot but think that your returns are not suitable to our affections; but on the contrary, you have shewn to us your dislike by attending at the established church. The posture of our affairs calls upon us to come to some resolution; accordingly, we have this day staid the church, and have resolved to adjourn our communion till the first Lord_s day in September; also have appointed a church meeting on Thursday next at three o_clock in the afternoon; we persuade ourselves you will take that opportunity to set matters in a clear light. We continue to pray for you, that you may with us be kept from every prevarication and temptation, that you may make manifest your _prelibations of glory,_ by a humble and meek discharge of the solemn obligations becoming your character!_

Signed by forty-four names of the men-members of the church.

At the meeting proposed on the 31st, Mr. Harrison attended, and being required to give the church satisfaction as to his principles; he made the following written declaration:—

_Forasmuch as I have been asked my sentiments, according as I determined to do, I do declare that I have thought fit to alter my sentiments, in divers things, and particularly with regard to baptism; and that I have no scruple about the lawfulness of conformity: and since a separation is now become necessary, I desire we may part in the most friendly manner.

July 31, 1729.

THOMAS HARRISON._

The church met the next Lord_s-day, and accepted his resignation of the pastoral office, and directed that all arrears of subscriptions due to Mr. Harrison should be made up and paid over to him.

Mr. Harrison soon after obtained ordination in the Church of England, and published a sermon which he had preached at the parish church of St. Leonard_s, Foster-lane, September 14, 1729. This was founded upon Philip. 1:20, *According to my earnest expectation and my hope, that in nothing I shall be ashamed*. In the preface to this he proposes _to give his reasons for conformity;_ but the most he attempts to accomplish is to show why he might, as he thought, innocently conform to the established church; not attempting to prove that he considered he ought to do so. In this discourse, too, he uses the hackney arguments for infant-baptism, and infers, from the practice not being forbidden in scripture, that it was lawful to be observed; and concludes by inferring, _That the sign of the cross, forms of prayer, sureties in baptism, and ceremonies, may be innocently complied with;_ and _That the [established] church imposing her laws, is no more than what every society practices, that the majority concludes the minority._ His attempts a reasoning were speedily, and ludicrously exposed, by the famous Orator Henley, in a theological lecture delivered at the Oratory in Lincoln_s Inn Fields, *

(* This place is mentioned as the _Oratory Meeting, Lincoln_s Inn Fields,_ in Maitland_s History of London, in 1739.)

on Sunday evening, October 5, 1729. This lecture was published with the title of _A Child_s Guide for the Rev. Mr. Thomas Harrison; or a Demonstration of the Falseness of his Principles, Reasonings, and Criticisms;– defending the Church against his reasons for Conformity; showing his numerous Contradictions and Errors as to Independency, a National or Political Church, the Infancy of the Primitive Church, The Model of Church Government, the Point of Baptism; &c. Proving his Arguments are directly the same with the arguments of the Church of Rome._ The orator, after having fully exposed his shallow arguments, and turned them all against himself, thus concludes, _He exhorts at last, _Brethren be as I am; that is, do not understand the scriptures, lay down false propositions, argue falsely from them, be as superficial as possible; begin with a text *That you shall not be ashamed*, and end with a prayer for better wisdom!_

From the events mentioned in our account of Pinners_-hall church, in relation to the funeral of the Lady Dowager Dame Page, the reader might have been prepared to expect that such vanity and foppery would at length expose this pedant to the contempt of the profane and the pity of the pious. In the Essay published by Dr. Gill on that occasion, he thus describes this gentleman: _Mr. Harrison tells them,_ [Mr. Lewis Way, and his wife, to whom his sermon was dedicated,] _A very small time was allotted him for finishing his discourse;_ time enough, unless it had been better performed. He goes on with compliments upon Sir and Madam, and concludes with praying for them, that they might long _enjoy together the blessings of an indulgent providence,_ that they might be _eminently useful, and extensively happy;_ which, by the help of transposition, would make a beautiful sentence; and that at last they _might receive a distinguishing crown;_ but whether he meant one different from that in the text, I cannot say. I subjoin to this, that I apprehend it would not have been amiss, if he had had the ingenuity to have acknowledged, that the character which he gave in the sermon of the deceased Lady, was drawn up by the gentleman to whom the dedication is made; whereas, he has published it to the world as his own, without giving the least hint of it._ *

(* Dr. Gill_s Sermons and Tracts, vol.iii.p.624.)

I have not learned what became of Mr. Harrison after he was rejected as the pastor of the church; but there is no doubt that he who had appeared as a meteor, attracting attention for a short time, on finding himself in the regions of space, soon sunk into insignificance and obscurity. The church now directed their attention towards Mr. (afterwards Dr.) Andrew Gifford. He appears to have preached during the month of October, 1729; and on November 6, a deputation of the church waited upon him, to desire him to preach for them another month: this however he declined. On November 30, they resolved _to desire Dr. Kinch, *

(* A member of Paul_s-alley church).

and Mr. Rees, (of Lime-house,) to preach to us for one year, or longer, in the morning, at their respective turns._

1729–35: Mr. Andrew Gifford.

At the church-meeting, Dec.14, 1729, it was agreed, _That our brother Mr. Andrew Gifford, be called to the pastoral care of this church, and that the following letter be sent to him accordingly:_

The Church of Christ in Little Wild-Street, London, to our well-beloved and worthy brother Andrew Gifford, minister of the gospel, at Bristol: grace, mercy, and truth, be multiplied through our Lord Jesus Christ.

_Dear Sir,

_The 14th of this instant, December, (being our sacrament-day,) was fixed on by the church for the choice of a pastor: the church proceeded accordingly, and chose you. Judging you to be in a good measure by the Lord fitted and prepared for that great, awful, and glorious work, to take the care of immortal souls, &c. And, Sir, the church, as such doth in the most solemn, general, and hearty manner, call upon you and for you, to take upon you the pastoral care of her. We are satisfied many prayers have been sent up to heaven on this account. We hope, nay, we would not doubt, but by your complying with the church_s call, that it will issue in the glory of God, and the mutual happiness of you and the people. True it is, the work is great, but we hope you see your call to be full and clear, in all respects; and be encouraged, it is the Lord_s work, and he will own and defend it, and bless it to the end of the world; as Matthew xxviii. latter end, and our blessed and dear Lord, had and hath such love for precious immortal souls that he washed them from their sins, in his own precious blood, &c. And therefore be not discouraged. But on the contrary, come forth in the name, fear, and strength of the Captain of Salvation.

Dear Sir, your answer to these, and presence here, will be hoped for and expected as soon as possible, because it is our desire to come to a settlement with all convenient speed. We heartily wish you a good journey, and pray that you may be brought to us in the fullness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ; and subscribe ourselves your brethren in the Lord.

Signed by thirty-five men.

The records add, – _In answer to the said letter, brother Andrew Gifford sent the following: –

_To the Church of Christ meeting in Little Wild-street, London, grace, mercy, and peace, from God the Father and our Lord Jesus Christ.

_Honoured and beloved in our Lord Jesus,

_It is not improbable you expected an answer to yours of the 14th instant before now. But when you shall be acquainted with the several steps necessary to be taken, in order to its being done in a regular manner, I doubt not you will be far from thinking it an unreasonable delay.

_When I consider my incapacity for so great a trust which you commit to my care; its importance to precious souls, especially yours and my own; how much the Redeemer's honour and interest in this world is concerned in it; and, above all, the awful account that must be given of it in another; my weakness and fears discourage me from the attempt. But upon the other hand, when I reflect upon the obligations I am under, both moral and

Christian, to do my utmost for the glory of God in the world, the conduct of his providence in this important affair, together with the righteousness and all-sufficiency of the Redeemer, and his faithful promise never to leave those who rely on him; I cannot but think it my duty to comply with your earnest and importunate request. And therefore, in the name of the Lord Jesus, the great head of the church and bishop of souls (with humble dependence upon him for abilities to discharge it,) I hereby signify my acceptance of your call to the pastoral office and care. Among other motives that induce me to it, I cannot omit mentioning your unanimity that appears in it; that fervent faith, love, and zeal; that order and harmony which I beheld when amongst you, and which is spoken of to your praise in the churches of Christ.

_Gratitude, as well as interest, obliges me to concur in your kind and pious wishes for my appearance in the fullness of the blessing of the gospel, and our mutual prosperity. May the great Shepherd also own and bless you with his presence, fill you with the Spirit, enable you to abound in love and good works, and at last crown you with immortal glory! Oh that by the ministry and ordinances of his house below, you may be prepared for a happy translation into the heavenly paradise.

_If God please, I propose to wait on you with all convenient speed, and in the mean time shall not cease to commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and give you an inheritance among them that are sanctified; which is the only way, at present, that I can shew how much I am, dear brethren and sisters, your faithful friend and affectionate servant for Jesus' sake,

Bristol, Dec. 27, 1729.

A. GIFFORD._

Mr. Gifford had been, for some time before this period, engaged as an assistant minister to Mr. George Eaton, at Nottingham, and was a member of that church. For two years he had been an assistant minister to Mr. Bernard Fostkett, of Bristol. The church at Nottingham, sent the following recommendatory letter to the church in Little Wild-street:—

The Church of Christ under the pastoral care of our well-beloved brother, Mr. George Eaton, meeting in Nottingham, to the Church of Christ meeting in Little Wild-street, London, lately under the pastoral care of that eminent servant of Christ, Mr. John Piggott, sendeth Christian salutation.

Whereas our dear and well-beloved brother, Mr. Andrew Gifford, who for some time was member with us, and a faithful fellow-helper in the work of the ministry among us, but through the divine Providence, that settles the bounds of our habitations, is now removed to you: we by these heartily recommend him to you, and sincerely pray that he may come in the fullness of the blessing of the gospel, and that he and you may have mutual

comfort, and an increase of all the graces and fruits of God's Holy Spirit, shall be the constant prayers of your unworthy brethren in the faith and fellowship of the gospel.

JOHN ROPER,

GEO. EATON, pastor

These in behalf

JOS. POLLARD

JOS. EATON

Of the rest,

WILLIAM LEIGH, THOMAS BULL,

BENJAMIN BULL, JOHN JERMA._

Jan. 25, 1729–30.

On Thursday, the 5th of Feb. 1729, Mr. Gifford was _unanimously called to, accepted of, and was invested in the pastoral office with the greatest solemnity._ It is not said who the ministers were that assisted at this ordination; but there is no doubt that the principal of the London ministers were engaged on the occasion. The deacons of the church at this time were, William Perkins, Daniel Perkins, John Turner, Samuel Nicholls, sen. Samuel Burch, sen. John Clater and Allen Evans.

About three years after Mr. Gifford's ordination, he lost his first wife, Martha Gifford. The following respectful notice of this event appears among the records of the church in Little Wild-street:– _She exchanged her place in the church below, for a much more glorious and happy one in the church triumphant above, Friday, Dec. 29, 1732. Without flattery, it may be said of her, she enjoyed plenty without pride, was easy without indolence, firm without obstinacy, and pious without ostentation._ She was buried Jan. 5, at Chesham, according her request, amongst the Baptists in the lower meeting-house, *

(* A plain stone, containing the above description of Mrs. Gifford, is in the Rev. Mr. Tomlin's meeting-house, at Chesham.)

and not in the chancel of the place of public worship, according to the establishment which belonged to the family. A funeral sermon was preached Jan. 14 following, at Wild-street, on Gen. 3:15, by brother Gill, and printed. This sermon is No. xxiii. in Dr. Gill's _Sermons and Tracts._ When first published, it was inscribed by the author _To John Ware, Esq. one of his Majesty's Justices of the Peace for the County of Bucks, and the rest of the relations of the deceased._ The character given of this pious and excellent female in the sermon, is a full corroboration of the above description of her eminent Christian character.

At the beginning of the year, 1733, the church were seriously thinking of removing their place of meeting, on account of some difficulties that occurred respecting the renewal of their lease. At a church meeting, Jan. 16, 1731, it was stated that _a convenient spot of ground is to be sold, upon which may be built a place to worship God in._ A committee

was appointed of the pastor, deacons, and others, to attend to the business. This was soon after relinquished, and a new lease was obtained in February, 1735.

About this time Mr. John Payne, an opulent member of the church, presented the pastor and deacons with twelve silver cups, for the use of the church at the Lord's table: these were accepted with expressions of _sincere and hearty thanks,_ and a promise _to apply them, to the utmost of their power, to the purposes for which they were given._

Notwithstanding the union and good understanding which at this period prevailed among the pastor and deacons, and the members of the church; and notwithstanding their earnest and hearty prayer, that _no difference or division may ever happen;_ it was not more than six months before _the accuser of the brethren_ contrived to kindle such a flame of angry contention among them, that it led soon after to a division in the church; and the painful effects of which continued to disturb the peace and prosperity of the London churches for more than half a century! *Behold, how great a fire a little matter kindleth.*

The scene of angry contention which took place in the church on this occasion, furnished a practical comment upon Solomon's remark, *—A brother offended is harder to be won than a strong city, and their contentions are like the bars of a castle.* Without descending to minute particulars, which would be uninteresting to general readers, suffice it to say, that the opinion of by far the greater part of the members was, that the charge exhibited against Mr. Gifford, for the purpose of removing him from the pastoral office, should not be received; that after the females who were present, and who were nearly as numerous as the men, and *all* of whom were for the pastors' continuance, had been prevented from voting, the measure was carried against the pastor by a majority of two voices only. The Society of Ministers, to whom Mr. Gifford belonged, appear to have acted with more precipitation than consisted with decorum, in excluding him from their Society; they also agreed to preach for the minority at Little Wild-street, who had kept possession of the meeting-house, and refused to comply with a respectful application to preach at the opening of the new meeting-house in Eagle-street. Thus a breach was made, which for many years was not closed, and Mr. Gifford had the mortification of losing the friendship and intimacy of many whom he highly esteemed.

Of Mr. Gifford, and those who adhered to him as their pastor, we shall have again to speak under the article of the church in Eagle-street.

1735–58: Dr. Joseph Stennett.

The church in Little Wild-street remained for some time destitute of a pastor, when they directed their attention towards Mr. (afterwards Dr.) Joseph Stennett, then pastor of the church at Exeter. At a church meeting, March 31, 1736, after deciding _that the sisters had right to vote in the choice of the minister,_ it was agreed to invite Mr. Stennett to the pastoral office, _provided the Almighty should make his way clear._ On March, 30, 1736–37, the committee reported to the church the steps they had taken in respect to Mr. Stennett and the church at Exeter, and that the issue was, that he had accepted their call. Upon this they appointed a meeting, _to be spent in praise and thanksgiving to God, for

his so seasonably appearing for us in the time of our distresses, and granting us a prospect of so happy a settlement._

JOSEPH STENNETT, D.D. was born in London, Nov. 6, 1692. He received his instructions in grammar and classical learning from two of the ablest scholars of that day, Mr. Ainsworth, author of the Latin Dictionary, and Dr. Ward, Professor of Rhetoric in Gresham College. Having devoted his attention to the work of the ministry, at an early age his learned and pious father cultivated his mind with the other branches of literature. When that eminent minister was on his death-bed, he gave this son, who was then in the twenty-first year of his age, very particular directions with respect to the management of his studies, and how to conduct himself as a minister in his future life.

He was about fifteen when he first made a public profession of religion by being baptized; and at the age of twenty-two he commenced his public ministry at Abergavenny, in Monmouthshire; but it appears he became a member of the church at Leominster, then under the care of Mr. Holder, to whom he was an assistant. Here he continued four or five years, during which time he received two very pressing invitations from different congregations in London, which he declined accepting. About the year 1719, he removed from Leominster to Exeter, and became pastor of the Baptist church in that city. Just at this time the dispute commenced between Messrs. Pierce and Hallet, and their Presbyterian congregations, respecting the doctrine of the Trinity. Mr. Stennett, though young, exerted himself with uncommon zeal, making a noble stand for the proper divinity of the Lord Jesus, and appearing with great luster and brightness in defending those fundamental truths of the gospel. While here, I find his name signed to the Association letters of the western churches in years 1722, 1725, 1726.

After spending about sixteen years at Exeter, he removed to London, and was ordained over the church in Wild-street, Sept. 15, 1737. Dr. Gill and Mr. Samuel Wilson preached upon this occasion, and all the associated London ministers attended. He was now about forty-five of age. Some instances of the evangelical zeal and patriotic ardour of Mr. Stennett, in the years 1738 and 1745, have been given in the history of those periods.

Mr. Stennett kept up a correspondence with his old friends at Exeter. I find a letter of his written to the Rev. Mr. John Waldron, in Exeter, March 22, 1750; which, because of its alluding to public events, I copy. In this he says,

_We have great reason to mourn as well as you, for the declension we see about us. Taylor's Scripture Doctrine of Atonement, as he calls it, is recent evidence to what lengths men are running. Though, to say the truth, I think it is almost as weak a book as it is corrupt. Bishop Leighton's Paraphrases have, I believe, pleased all good men among us. The Bishop of London, [Gibson,] not long since told me, that though he wished a regulation of the public ecclesiastical constitution, and that many things greatly wanted mending, yet the method proposed would not do; and the event shows it: for the matter seems to be buried already, and I believe it is best of all it is so; for I am well persuaded many of the persons concerned, aimed chiefly at expunging the principal doctrine of Christianity out of the ritual, and sinking them if possible in their new version of the

Bible. I told his Lordship, indeed, that I more than ever saw the usefulness of the Book of common Prayer; for considering how little the Scriptures are read by the common people, and how little the Gospel is preached by the clergy, if it were not for what is said of Christ in the Prayer Book, multitudes would forget there was any such person. He heartily joined in my observation, and told me he lately heard a sermon by an eminent preacher, who seemed to labour to keep the mane of Christ out of it. _For my part,_ added he, _my time is now short, and therefore my charge to all my clergy is short too. I say to all of them that come to me, see to it that you preach Jesus Christ,– don_t preach Seneca, nor Plato, but preach Jesus Christ._

_I have done what I could in the affair of Breslau. The very worthy and reverend Mr. Christian Lewis Ficene, their messenger and agent, dined with me twice, and I had great pleasure in his conversation. The bishops plainly rejected their case, as they were Presbyterians.

_I have spent three afternoons in the gallery of the House of Commons within this fortnight, to hear the debates respecting the abuse of spirituous liquors; when such things were said, respecting the necessity of some vigorous steps, in order to reform the horrible public wickedness that grows at such a rate among us, and those things were said by some of the greatest men in the House, and in the administration, as well as others, that I am not without hopes, something will be done in earnest.

_You will hear before this comes to your hand, of the awful stroke of providence upon us, in the death of the Prince of Wales, who died on Wednesday night, of the pleuretic fever, after we had hoped all the danger was over. It has affected his Majesty much, and spread an awful apprehension among all thinking men. What the consequence will be, the great governor of the world only knows. _Tis our mercy that he reigns, that we may trust in him, and may pray to him. Oh that we had but hearts to do so as we should, and all would be well!

_I am much obliged to you for the friendly notice you take of the friendly providence that has directed the alteration of my condition. I have great reason to desire a share in your prayers, that I might be kept thankful and humble, and may be rendered more useful. When I have begged that my delay of writing may not hinder the continuance of a correspondence so happily received; my paper obliges me to say, *Manum de tabula*, also, and assure you that I am.

Your most obedient and affectionate humble servant,

JOSEPH STENNETT._

P.S. I am glad to hear Mr. Jones goes on well. My service attends him, and Mr. Lavington. I saw Sir William Younge at the House of Commons, on Wednesday last, and have not found him in better health for a long time *

(* Dr. Rippon_s *Baptist Register*, vol. iii. p. 250.)

The University of St. Andrews, at Edinburgh, in the year 1754, created him Doctor in Divinity, at the instance and recommendation of his Royal Highness the Duke of Cumberland, their Chancellor, who condescended to send the diploma to Mr. Stennett by his Secretary.

A few years after this he was laid aside by afflictions from his beloved employment. When at Bath, about two months before his death, he dictated the following affectionate letter, to his son Samuel.

_To the Church of Christ meeting in Little Wild-Street.

_My very dear and Christian Friends and Brethren,

_You cannot easily imagine how much pain it has given me to think that, after so much time has elapsed since I received your most Christian and tender letter, I should not be able to get a few moments of ease and strength enough to myself to write a few lines to you; nor indeed such a composure of mind as to dictate properly to my son, who, in the midst of all his filial tenderness for me, and the same bowels of affection for you as I have myself, has met with so sensible a stroke in his own family. *

(* The death of his only child)

It is now near three months since I laid down upon this, which I still call my dying bed; and which, notwithstanding the changes I have passed through, I still apprehend will be so. It is a deep scheme of providence indeed; my pains are so excruciating, and with very imperfect intermissions either by night or by day! Oh what a heart have I! How obdurate to render it necessary for instruction to be sealed by such a severe discipline as this! And yet if God had been pleased to let out that wrath upon my poor soul which my sins have righteously deserved, how much more deplorable would my case have been! But, through unbounded goodness, I have been able to sing of mercy as well as judgment. The Refiner has sat by all the time I have been in the furnace; and I have not been without saving instruction, effectually impressed, and divine supports afforded. Sometimes I think I could rejoice to talk to you once more of the loving-kindness of the Lord, and of what he has done for my soul, and to recommend that dear Jesus, with all the blessings of his salvation to your precious souls, which I have often sincerely, though poorly done in the course of my ministry. This has been a searching time with me and I know I love you dearly. And it pleases me to think how this awakening affliction roused your sympathy, and I really believe increased your affection to me; and that you have been led to give such an instructive example on this occasion of faith and prayer to other churches. Go on, dear brethren, and be not weary of praying, waiting, and believing. In due time I shall receive the benefit of your faith and prayer, as I trust your own souls and your families will also.

_My dear brethren, let your love abound one towards another, forbearing one another, forgiving one another, as God for Christ_s sake hath forgiven you. Exercise your charity to all men in the manner in which the gospel recommends it. It is my great comfort in the

views of eternity that I have been led, in these changeable and sad times, steadily and constantly to maintain those doctrines, which I find are able to support me at such a season as this. I call my dear charge at Exeter, where I spent the first part of my ministry, the Lord knows in great weakness, to testify this concerning me. I always thought the great design of the gospel was to lay the creature in the dust, and to exalt the great Redeemer of the church. I always taught both them and you to love Jesus Christ, to live upon him, and to expect your justification from him alone, his blood, his righteousness imputed, and his intercession.

_But my pains and weakness oblige me to bring these broken thoughts to a close. Hold fast the form of sound words which you have received of me in faith and love. And there is one thing I desire may be particularly remembered, that, notwithstanding all the difficulties which attend a due apprehension of the connection between the grace of God, and the work of the Spirit, on the one hand, and the obligations of duty we are under in order to our salvation, on the other; if the gospel be true, it is as much our duty to repent and believe, and be holy, as it is Christ's promise to save us by the operations of his Spirit. *Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. For it is God which worketh in you, both to will and to do of his good pleasure.*

_Brethren, as you would have your souls prosper, labour to maintain holy discipline in the church. Attend early and constantly on the public worship of God: cultivate the duties of religion in your families and your closets: see that the generous spirit, that has long prevailed among you, for the support and encouragement of the interest of our Lord Jesus Christ, may not decay: be exemplary in your conversation: and use your kind endeavours to restore such as are departed from the truth, or by an unholy walk have brought themselves under the censure of the church.

_Finally, my dear brethren, farewell. If we meet together again in this life, as it will be an amazing appearance of divine power and goodness, so I trust it will be to answer some very valuable end. But, if it is otherwise ordered, God grant we may all have a glorious meeting in the better state, and not one be missing there! These are the constant prayers of your most faithful and affectionate brother and servant in our common Lord.

Bath, Nov. 30, 1757.

JOSEPH STENNETT._

The disorder which issued in his death was a mortification in his foot, under which he laboured nearly six months. During this time, though the appearance of his foot was very terrible to those about him, he did not appear surprised or startled himself: even when he was told, at his first attack, that the disease might carry him off in a few days, he received the communication with amazing firmness and composure. Indeed, through the whole of his affliction, he manifested such Christian heroism, that some, who knew not the inward power of religion in supporting the mind, were constrained to acknowledge its divine influence. His patience in bearing the most excruciating tortures was very extraordinary; not a murmuring or repining word ever escaped his lips; and during intervals from pain, his enjoyments were considered by those about him to be superior to any he had ever experienced before. His serenity and cheerfulness continued with scarcely any

interruption. He had not those raptures which some have experienced upon their dying beds, yet his faith and hope continued unshaken to the end of life.

Dr. Stennett finished his course Feb.7, 1758, in the sixty-sixth year of his age. His funeral sermon was preached by Dr. Gill, at Little Wild-street, from Phil.i.21.—*For me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.*

In describing his character, the Doctor says, _His fine natural parts, acquired knowledge, and, above all, the grace of God, and the eminent gifts of it bestowed upon him fitting him for public service, all contributed to form his character, in whom the scholar, the Christian, and the divine, were so happily united. His ministerial abilities and qualifications are well known. His mien and deportment in the pulpit were graceful; his voice low, but soft and pleasant; and his language accurate and correct. He had a large compass of thought, freedom of expression, and fervency of soul, as well in preaching as in prayer, and would often treat his subject in a very comprehensive view, to the great delight, as well as profit, of his hearers. As to his religious sentiments, besides those concerning baptism, and the Sabbath, wherein he differed from many, there were others of greater importance,— the doctrines of our first reformers, which he imbibed in his younger years, and abode by them throughout his ministrations to the end of life. *

(* Dr. Stennett was Sabbatarian; and, on the subject of the invitations of the gospel to his unconverted hearers, differed from Dr. Gill. The manner in which Dr. Gill speaks of his views of the truths of the gospel, furnishes another proof of the that love and union among _Calvinists differing in opinion,_ which Mr. Brine had so strongly recommended.)

With regard to his political character, he was a warm asserter and defender of the liberties of mankind; most zealously attached to the interest of his Majesty, King George, and his royal house; heartily loved all whom the king esteemed as his friends; and was greatly offended with those who gave into an unreasonable opposition to his ministers. His talents for public service, in civil affairs, were discerned by some persons of the first rank and eminency, who were pleased to honor him with their friendship and acquaintance. And the easy access which this gave him to those in power, rendered him capable of performing many good and kind offices to multitudes of persons, which he attended to with great cheerfulness and assiduity, and frequently with happy success. So that his death is a public loss to mankind, particularly to the whole Dissenting interest, and especially with respect to its civil and political affairs. He was _an indulgent husband, tender father, kind brother, amiable relation, and loving friend._ _

Dr. Stennett left a widow and several children to lament his loss. Two of his sons had been called to the ministry by the church in Little Wild-street; Joseph, his eldest, who was settled at Coate, in Oxfordshire, and Samuel, who first assisted his father, and then succeeded him in the pastoral office.

The following is a list of Dr. Stennett_s works:—

1. God's Awful Summons to a Sinful Nation, considered in a Sermon preached at Little Wild-Street, in Commemoration of the High Wind, on the 27th of Nov. 1737: Amos 4:12–
2. The Christian Strife for the Faith of the Gospel, preached at the Rev. Mr. Hill's Meeting-place in Thames-street, Feb. 9, 1798.–
3. National Ingratitude exemplified, &c._
4. The Nature and Reward of True Liberality, preached at Watford, June 10, 1741, also in London; occasioned by the Death of Mr. Samuel Burch,–
5. A Sermon on Ps. cxliv.9–11, preached at Little Wild-street, the 17th of July, 1743, on account of the Battle at Dettingen; Second Edition.–
6. Rabshakeh's Retreat; a Sermon preached Dec. 18, 1748, the Day appointed for a General Fast, on occasion of the present Rebellion.–
7. A Thanksgiving Sermon, preached the 25th of April, 1749.

1758–60: Church in Little Wild-street.

During the pastorate of Dr. Stennett, two other persons were called to the ministry, Mr. Joseph Palmer, who settled at Bilderstone and Battisford, in Suffolk; and Mr. Caleb Evans, who was afterwards the worthy and learned tutor of the academy at Bristol.

An eminent member of this church, Mr. John Taylor *

(* The biographical accounts of Messrs. Taylor, Burch, and Evans, are unavoidably postponed to the next volume for want of room.)

died in the year 1729, leaving a legacy of forty pounds, for the purpose of a sermon being annually preached on November 27, in commemoration of the dreadful storm of wind in 1703.

Another useful deacon of this church was Mr. Samuel Burch, who died June 10, 1741, at Watford, in the eighty-second year of his age. He appears to have been a man of great liberality, and for the purpose of promoting a spirit of Christian liberality, he left a request in his will, that his pastor, Dr. Joseph Stennett, would preach from Isaiah xxxii.8.

Mr. Allen Evans, whose firmness and integrity in the _sheriff's cause_ has been mentioned, was until very late in life a member and a deacon of this church. He became a member during the ministry of Mr. John Piggott, when he was very young. For many successive years, he represented the congregation in the Society of Deputies, and was a manager of the Widow's Fund. He was one of the treasurers of the Baptist Fund for many years. He had been an oilman in Westminster, but had retired from business before his thirteen years' struggle with the city of London.

Mr. Evans died Feb. 17, 1767, in the 82nd year of his age. In consequence of his having united himself with the church in Barbican, *

(* For the purpose of setting this event in a clear light before the reader, he is informed that Mr. Evans, while a deacon and member of the church in Wild-Street, in April 1756, communed at the Lord's table with the church in Paul's-alley, then under the care of Mr. Joseph Burroughs. Mr. Evans desired Mr. Joseph Stennett to inform the church that he had done so, and that it was his request, that _his wife and others of his family should sit down occasionally, as they should see fit, at Wild-street._ The writer conjectures that Mrs. Allen, and others of the family were members of the church in Barbican whom the church in Little Wild-street refused to admit to their communion; on this account Mr. Evans sent word, that _on account of their want of charity, he should no longer consider himself a member with them_ The church informed the messengers from the Barbican church, November 4, 1756, _That they had Mr. Evans in much regard; that they knew of no willful offence given him; that as he had rent himself from them, and thereby dissolved the relationship between them, they could not dismiss him, but as to his moral character they had no charge against him._)

a few years before, his funeral sermon was preached by Mr. Daniel Noble at Barbican, on the 1st of March. This was published with the title _Religion, perfect Freedom;_ and is founded upon John 8:32. *And the truth shall make you free.*

1758-60: Dr. Samuel Stennett.

The church found a worthy successor in the son of their late pastor, Mr. Samuel Stennett. The following is the letter they sent him upon that occasion:

_Reverend and Dear Sir,

We, the church of Christ, meeting in Little Wild-street, lately under the pastoral care of the Rev. Dr. Joseph Stennett, your dear and honoured Father, cannot omit the earliest opportunity of assuring you of our most tender sympathy on occasion of the mournful providence which has removed from you a most affectionate and indulgent father, and from us a most faithful and worthy pastor.

We forbear to mention the great loss which the church of Christ in general, as well as this particular branch of it, has sustained by this awful stroke, that we may not afresh open the springs of your sorrow, and add to the weight of your affliction, which we are sensible must be very great upon this occasion. But we pray God to support and comfort you, and your honoured mother, and the whole family, under this trying dispensation. And we cannot but hope and trust that that God, who doth not afflict willingly his own children and who will not lay upon them more than he will enable them to bear, but who is of tender mercy and full of compassion, and who has so graciously supported you all hitherto, will still appear for you, and grant you his consolations, which we doubt not you have experienced to be neither few nor small.

_We cannot but take this opportunity to return you our most hearty and unfeigned thanks for your services in the ministry amongst us, and to assure you of the great and general

acceptance with which your ministrations have been attended; and we should be very wanting to ourselves, did we not express our hope and earnest desire of again enjoying your labours, as soon as your afflictive circumstances will permit; and that you will in due time be prevailed upon to accept of the pastoral office amongst us, which is a step that appears to us so plainly pointed out by providence, that we promise ourselves your indulgence in this early mention of it.

And now, dear Sir, we heartily commend you to the divine favour and protection, wishing you the continuance of his gracious support, that a large portion of the blessed Spirit may rest upon you, and that you may have abundance of success in promoting the interest of our common Lord and Redeemer: and remain, your affectionate brethren in Christ._

Signed by thirty-two brethren.

The church in Wild-street contributed to the Baptist Fund, at the time to which we have brought its history, about a hundred and fifty pounds per annum. It is at present under the care of Mr. James Hargreaves.

VOLUME III.

BOOK. II.

1735 60: Church in Eagle-street.

CHURCH IN EAGLE-STREET.

IN giving the history of this church, the writer expresses his regret, that like many other of the Dissenting churches, it owes its rise to strife and debate, which ended in division and separation. If brotherly love had been cultivated, and Christian zeal manifested, our churches might have peaceably branched out in different directions, and then their histories would have been lovely and of good report, instead of furnishing our enemies with occasion for reproaching Dissenters with restless and unsettled notions, and with quarrelsome and insubordinate dispositions. But while we condemn the evil passions which have at times produced the establishment of new churches, we cannot but admire the overruling providence of God, which has caused even these things to subserve the accomplishment of divine purposes, and _turned out rather for the furtherance of the gospel._ No one will deny that circumstances may arise in a congregational church, which not only warrant, but demand a separation, if improper measures cannot otherwise be counteracted nor prevented. Such for instance is the case, when any of the members are deprived of their just rights in voting on matters involving their spiritual privileges. The occasion which led to the formation of the church in Eagle-street, was, (as it has been already stated in our account of Little Wild-street,) because the sisters were prevented from giving their votes on a question relating to the *rejection*, when they had always been admitted to vote in the *choice* of a pastor.

1735–60: Dr. Andrew Gifford.

The records of the church in Eagle-street, commence with the following statement:
Whereas, in the year 1735-36, there arose an unhappy dispute in the dissenting congregation of Baptists, that then met in Little Wild-street; we, whose names are hereunto subscribed, (being the majority of members of the said congregation,) do in the fear and presence of God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, agree to continue as a church of Jesus Christ, baptized upon profession of faith, to worship Him through the influence of his Holy Spirit, according to the directions given us in his word. This is signed by fifty-two men, and thirty-nine women, besides the pastor, Mr. Andrew Gifford.

After leaving the meeting-house in Little Wild-street, they met for a time in Red-cross-street, and afterwards in Bear Yard, Lincoln's Inn Fields. Several persons were baptized while the church was thus circumstanced, or as the records express it, _during the troubles of the church,_ by the pastor, in the baptistery in Fair-street, Horselydown.

While thus unsettled as a congregation, they were erecting a new meeting-house in Eagle Street, Red Lion Square, Holborn; which was a neat square building, with three galleries, and thirty-eight seats below, eighteen of which were double; it was capable of containing about four hundred person, and was opened for public worship, Lords' day, Feb. 20, 1736–37, when Mr. Gifford preached from Isa, 63:16 *Doubtless thou art our Father, though Abraham be ignorant of us, and Israel acknowledge us not: thou O Lord art our Father, our Redeemer; thy name is everlasting.* It seems hardly necessary to remind the reader, that this text was selected in allusion to the opprobrium under which the pastor and church laboured when thus constrained to open a new place for the worship of God. The place had been used on Feb. 17th, the Thursday preceding, when _a solemn day of fasting and prayer was held for a blessing on the church in that place, when the Lord gave us a resting-place, after many great and sore troubles._ On that day, the church covenant was agreed to, and signed by about one hundred members. Here Mr. (afterwards Dr.) Andrew Gifford, continued to preach with great popularity and success. In the year 1760, twenty-four years from its first opening, it was found necessary to enlarge the meeting-house by adding about twenty feet to its length, and erecting an additional gallery behind the pulpit; it now held six hundred persons. In 1748, the baptistery was made, and first used in that year.

In the year 1820 the meeting-house was again very considerably enlarged, and it will now contain about 900 persons. There is a school-room also, in which are instructed, on the Lord's day, 200 children.

Among the persons who adhered to Mr. Gifford, and who left Little Wild-street with him, was that liberal benefactor Mr. John Payne. In our account of the church at a former period, mention was made of his presenting twelve silver cups to be used at the ordinance of the Lord's Supper. The following further statement in reference to these cups, which are in monthly use by the church, I find in the records inserted in the hand writing of Mr. Payne:–

_Whereas I, John Payne, did in October, 1734, give to the congregation of Baptists that then met in Little Wilde Street, twelve silver cups for the use of the Lord_s table, and there happened a difference in the said congregation in April, 1735, which was agreed to be left to the arbitration of several gentlemen; who awarded me back the said silver cups as my own property:—Now I do hereby make a free gift of the above said silver cups to Mr. Andrew Gifford pastor, Mr. John Egby, Mr. Richard Slade, Mr. John Brailsford, and Mr. Hugh Amony, deacons of the protestant congregation of Baptists under the care of Mr. Andrew Gifford, now meeting in Eagle Street, in the parish of St. George, Bloomsbury, *in a trust* to them and their successors, for the use of the said congregation at the Lord_s table; and my intention, will, and desire is, that the said twelve silver cups, shall be, and remain to them, and their successors, and the majority of members being communicants of the said congregation in Eagle Street, *both men and women*, for the said use of the Lord_s table for ever. As witness my hand,

April 3, 1737.

JOHN PAYNE.

Memorandum, that the words *Little Wylde* were taken our by my order, and the word *Eagle* engraved in their room.

The following is the inscription referred to by Mr. Payne, which is round the bottom of each cup, viz. _The gift of brother John Payne to the Protestant Dissenting Congregation now meeting in Eagle Street; baptized upon a personal profession of repentance towards God, and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. Oct. 4, 1734._

This excellent man, who was a turner, rendered considerable assistance towards the expense of building the meeting-house, and at his death, he left the church residuary legatee to a considerable estate; but which was not obtained without a tedious and expensive suit in chancery. He died Sept.6, 1757, and his death is noticed in the church book in an affectionate and respectful manner.

The following are the particulars I have been able to collect respecting the first pastor of the church in Eagle Street, the Rev. Andrew Gifford, D.D. He was born at Bristol on Saturday, Aug. 17, 1700. He took his name from that of his venerable grandfather, the very excellent pastor of the Pithay church in that city. His father was Emanuel Gifford, who was also a very respectable pastor of that church. *

(* The following is the inscription on his grave-stone in the Baptist burying ground, Bristol. _Here lieth all that was mortal, of a faithful and wise servant of Christ. EMANUEL, son of that truly apostolical man of God, ANDREW GIFFORD; with whom in his youth he first suffered and then laboured twenty-eight years in the vineyard; and was not long after him suddenly called to receive his hire, in the fifty-first year of his age, Oct. 4, 1724.

_Here also sleep the remains of his beloved wife ELEANOR, the survivor of all the sufferers in Newgate, [Bristol] in the last century, for the sake of a good conscience; eminent for piety, industry, prudence, patience, and meekness.

_These died in the faith. Happy is that people whose God is the Lord; with which words she calmly bid adieu to time, Feb.24, 1733, in the seventy-sixth year of her pilgrimage. It appears that Mrs. Gifford came to London after her husband's death, to reside with her son. Her death is thus noticed in the records of the church of Eagle-street, in the handwriting of Dr. Gifford:–_Feb 24, 1738. This day our sister Eleanor Gifford exchanged this life for a better, and a place in the church militant below, for one in the church triumphant above. She was for many years an honourable member of the church in the Pithay, Bristol, and was the last survivor of that church, who was honoured with imprisonment in Newgate there, for adhering to the despised and persecuted cause of Jesus, in the latter part of King Charles the Second's reign. She died in a good old age, aged above 75. Her constant motto was, Happy is the people whose God is the Lord._)

The subject of our memoir was at an early period of his life made acquainted with the power of divine grace, and was baptized upon a profession of his faith, Aug. 2, 1715. It being considered by the church that he possessed promising gifts, he was soon after sent to the academy at Tewkesbury, kept by that eminent scholar, the Rev. Mr. Jones. Some of his fellow students were Darracott, afterwards of Wellington, whose memoirs have been published under the title of *_The Star in the West,_* by the Rev. Mr. Bennett of Rotherham, and Dr. Secker, who by conforming to the established church, arose to the high worldly distinction of Archbishop of Canterbury. Mr. Gifford finished his studies under the direction of the celebrated Dr. Ward, of Gresham College. In a letter written by that gentleman to the Rev. Emanuel Gifford, of Bristol, dated Gresham College, June 6, 1723, the following honourable testimonial is borne to the talents and application of his pupil:___I have the pleasure to tell you, that since your son has been with me, he has pursued his studies with great application, and in my apprehension to good advantage,___

1735 60: Dr. Andrew Gifford.

Mr. Gifford was at this time a member of the Pinners_-hall church, Devonshire-square, to which he had been dismissed for the purpose of his attending Gresham College. In a letter written by the Rev. Thomas Richardson, the pastor, July 23, 1723, to Mr. Emanuel Gifford, he says, *_Your son having been dismissed from you to us, at his request, I thought it my duty to watch over him; and as I believe him to be a young gentleman of great seriousness and good sense; and as he has spent some years in studies preparative to the ministry, in which I hope (if it please God to give him health) he will be very useful; I desired him about a week before our last church meeting, to speak before the members only, from some text of Scripture; but I could not prevail upon him any thing more than to go to prayer, &c. Mr. Gifford was first settled at Nottingham for about two years; he then returned to Bristol, where he assisted Mr. Bernard Foskett.*

After the death of Mr. Mark Key, pastor of the Devonshire-square church, in 1726, they resolved to send a letter to Mr. Gifford, *_to invite him to London to have a further taste of his gift, in order, if it should prove acceptable, to call him to that work._*

From this it should seem that Mr. Gifford had preached already to the church, probably while at Gresham College.

The letter sent him was the following, dated Sept. 26, 1726.

_The Church of Christ meeting in Devonshire-square, London, late under the pastoral care of our late dear and honoured brother, Mr. Mark Key, to our beloved brother, Mr. Andrew Gifford, sendeth greeting,

_SIR,

_It having pleased our heavenly father to take from us our dear pastor, and the hopes of many of us among ourselves being expired; the taste that Providence gave us of your ministerial gifts induced us the last Lord_s day sevensnight, at our church meeting, to propose that you should be entreated to come and remain some time with us; and if our gracious God shall incline our hearts to each other, we shall not be long as sheep without a shepherd.

Our bond of love being firm, we the more chearfully in the name of the church, desire you will please to come to us with all convenient speed, and we trust all will tend to the glory of God; to whose protection we commit you, and subscribe ourselves in the bonds of the gospel.

Signed by seventeen brethren.

To this Mr. Gifford replied in the November following, that _something extraordinary had occurred which he could neither foresee nor prevent, which induced him to request the church would wait for him till the spring._

From some cautions to avoid the snares of popularity, given to Mr. Gifford, while at Nottingham, by his worthy friend the Rev. Mr. Noble, of Bristol, who had succeeded his father at the Pithay, it is probable that his preaching had attracted much of the public attention. He removed to London in December, 1729, and the letter of dismissal from Nottingham, printed in our account of the church in Little Wild-street, is a very honourable testimony to his character.

Of his settlement at Little Wild-street, and of the troubles in to which he was unexpectedly and suddenly plunged in that connection, after being very respectfully and usefully employed as the pastor of that church for nearly six years, we have already given the painful relation.

About the year 1731, while Mr. Gifford was pastor of the church in Little Wild-street, he had contracted an intimate acquaintance with Sir Richard Ellys, Bart. the learned author of *Fortuita Sacra*, consisting of Critical Notes upon certain Texts of Scripture *

(* In Dr. Doddridges_ *Family Expositor*, there is a note upon Matthew vi. 16, in which that learned and eminently distinguished writer says of Sir Richard Ellys, Bart., _the learned author of *Fortuita Sacra*, p.13_22, has rendered it unnecessary for me to add any thing more on this, or the following verses._ Sir Richard Ellys had a seat in the House of Commons, through several successive Parliaments. He was at the latter part of his life, a member of Mr. Bradbury_s church in New Court, Carey Street. There is a short but highly wrought eulogium upon him, in the *History of Dissenters*, by Messrs. Bogue and Bennett, vol. iv. p. 6)

Mr. Gifford was chaplain to the family of Sir Richard for many years, taking the lead in family worship, especially in morning and evening prayer. For this office he received forty guineas annually, as a present from Sir, Richard, till his death; and from his lady also till about the year 1745, when she married again.

Mr. Gifford marked the sense he entertained of the friendship of Sir Richard Ellys, by dedicating a sermon to him preached in Little Wild-street, Nov. 27, 1734, in commemoration of the high wind in 1703. In this Mr. Gifford stiles himself, _your much obliged and affectionate servant in the gospel;_ and prays _that yours, and your good lady_s unaffected piety, prudent zeal, and disinterested benevolence, may long continue ornamental to your country, and blessings to the church of Christ._

He visited Edinburgh in this year, and was honoured with the freedom of that city; he was in 1754 also presented with a diploma, creating him doctor in divinity, from the Marischal College at Aberdeen.

In the year 1757 he was appointed assistant librarian of the British Museum. The doctor had been some time before a member of the Antiquarian Society. He was also personally acquainted with the Lord Chancellor Hardwicke, with Archbishop Herring, and with the Speaker Onslow. But it was the affection of his unshaken patron, Sir Richard Ellys, which procured him that distinguished station; doubtless from a persuasion of his eminent qualifications for the situation. It is said that the doctor_s private collection of coins was, before that time, one of the most curious in Britain, and had been purchased by King George II. as an addition to his own cabinet. In a perfect acquaintance with ancient coins and manuscripts, it is said he eminently excelled.

In this station, which he continued to fill till his death, his opportunities for improvement were very much enlarged, and having a talent to receive and communicate knowledge with unaffected politeness, his acquaintance among the nobility and gentry was very extensive. Some of them exchanged visits with him, and some of the first rank discovered their respect for him, either by their correspondence, or by an occasional attendance upon his ministry at the meeting-house in Eagle-street. Among these are mentioned, the Marquis of Lothian, the Earl of Halifax, Lord Dartmouth, Lady Buchan, Lady Huntingdon, &c. *

(* There are some pleasing anecdotes related of the Doctor while he was employed in showing the Museum. Some gentlemen were inspecting the Museum under the Doctor's guidance, amongst whom was a profane youth, who hardly uttered a sentence without taking the name of the Lord in vain. The Doctor, who had kept his eye upon him, was at length asked by him, "Whether they had not a certain very ancient manuscript there? On coming to it, the Doctor presenting it, asked the youth if he could read it? Being answered in the affirmative, the Doctor wished him to read a paragraph, which was, *Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain*. The irreverent youth read, and blushed; the countenances of his companions seemed to acknowledge the justness of the reproof, and the polite Christian manner in which it was administered. *Funeral Sermon by Dr. Rippon, Note, p. 41.*

On another occasion, a gentleman who was looking at some natural curiosities, swore in a shocking manner, calling them ugly, monstrous, &c. The Doctor incensed at the vulgarity and impiety expressed by his reviling the works of the all-wise and bountiful Creator, gently led him to a large glass which stood in the room, and firmly asked him to look there and judge whether there was any thing in the works of creation, more monstrous than himself! This last story was related to the writer, when he once accidentally met at the British Museum, the late Rev. Mr. Jermain, Minister of the Scotch Church, Oxenden Street, London, and author of the *"Memoirs of Pious Women,"* &c.)

1760 84: Dr. Andrew Gifford.

The attendance required at the Museum did not render him inattentive to his pastoral duties, nor did his acquaintance with persons in the higher circles of life, make him inaccessible to the people of his flock. His house, in a court at the north-west corner of Queen-square, was always open for their reception, and he always met them with a cheerful welcome.

From about the year 1760 to the close of his life, a period of twenty-four years, he preached with great acceptance, once a month, at the Lord's-day evening lecture, St. Helen's, in connection with several ministers of the independent denomination. Dr. Gifford was very intimate with that eminent servant of Christ, the Rev. George Whitefield; he attended him for the purpose of shewing his respect for his character, when Mr. Whitefield laid the first stone of the Chapel in Tottenham-court-road; and afterwards preached for him at the tabernacle in Moorfields. It is said that the doctor being once met in his way to Tottenham Court Chapel, was asked if he was going to hear Mr. Whitefield; he replied, "I am going to light my farthing rushlight at his flaming torch."

The ministry of Dr. Gifford was eminently useful in the conversion of sinners, and in building up the church of God under his pastoral care. He was a pathetic, and yet powerful preacher, uniting in his character the Barnabas and the Boanerges. His sermons were highly evangelical; he was a Calvinist of the old school, his system having been

formed upon the confession of faith of the Baptist churches, published by the assembly in 1689. The main topics of his discourses were, the fall of man, _redemption by Christ, _the divinity of our Lord, _the work of the Spirit, _the sweetness of the promises, _the perseverance of saints in holiness to heaven. After he had briefly explained his text, with these and similar doctrines, he made a direct appeal to the heart, interested all the passions of the soul, and summoned conscience before a solemn tribunal. His biographer, Dr. Rippon, says of him, _His heart was in the work, and upon some occasions, particularly, it might have been said of him as of one of the reformers, *vividas vultus, vividi oculi, vividae manus, denique omnia vivida*, i.e. his countenance was alive, his eyes were alive, his hands were alive, in short all were alive. If ever any man was all alive in the public service of God, Dr. Gifford was the man, and he retained his evangelical savour and his stated and occasional labours, even to the very last, with but very little abatement; insomuch that when he was above eighty years of age, he was more active and zealous in his master_s work, than many young men of twenty-five. It was thus, through a divine blessing upon his labours, that he kept up a numerous auditory, and made every one say, what indeed appears true, _that the doctor would die popular. _

It is to the honour of this worthy pastor, that he was always humble, notwithstanding the success which attended his labours, and the respect with which he was treated. When he heard a person say, that the Lord had blessed his ministry to them, he used with great modesty, and sometimes with tears to reply, _Give God the praise, the man is a sinner. _

When he found persons, especially if they were young females, much intimidated at the prospect of speaking their experience before the church, he would affectionately encourage them by saying, _My dear child, you will never have such another opportunity of speaking to the honour of the Lord Jesus, and to the praise of the riches of his grace while you live. _

In his friendly and pastoral visits he was always cheerful, and serious. When he entered a house he would begin the conversation by familiarly asking, _What do you think of Jesus Christ? Do you, my dear child, love the Lord Jesus Christ? _ When he prayed in the families which he visited, he was remarkably affectionate, and so very particular in suiting his petitions and thanksgivings to the cases of the individuals who composed them, that many had reason to bless God for his prayers as well as his sermons.

In the administration of the ordinance of Baptism and the Lord_s Supper, he was uncommonly lively and spiritual. While he was of a very catholic spirit, and heartily loved good men of every denomination, he was a zealous Baptist, and particularly happy when attending to that divine rite. He used to say, when he was unwell, and in prospect of administering that ordinance, _I shall get well, I hope, if I can but go and baptize. _ He frequently said, when some have spoken of the danger attending such a service to his health, _I never took cold by baptizing, that I can recollect, in my life. _ *

(* Dr. Gifford and Mr. Gwennap, were employed in baptizing forty-six persons in the year 1767, in the river at the back of the house belonging to Mr. Ebenezer Hollick, a respectable member of the church at Cambridge. A very picturesque

description of this _public baptism_ is given in Robinson_s *History of Baptism*, p. 541.

Mr. Robinson and Dr. Gifford, were intimately acquainted. The Doctor wished Mr. Robinson to undertake to write a history of the Baptists; and for that purpose he offered him access to the British Museum, and also a room in his house for the inspection of manuscripts, &c. Many of the leading men among the Baptists in London, held a meeting for the purpose of promoting this object, at the King_s-head in the Poultry, Nov. 6th, 1781, when Dr. Gifford was in the chair. At that meeting, resolutions were passed, requesting Mr. Robinson to come to London early in the week before the second Lords_-day in every month, and stay till the latter end of the following week, for the purpose of collecting materials for the said work, and to preach at Dr. Gifford_s on the Lord_s-day evening, &c. See Dyer_s *Life Of Robinson*, p. 214.)

The last time he attended to the Lord_s Supper with his beloved charge was on June 6, 1784, when he went to the table very weak and low; and the first sentence he uttered was, *With my soul have I desired to eat this passover with you, before I suffer*. He broke the bread, but was not able to pour out the wine. He dwelt with peculiar emphasis upon the words, (afterwards selected by Dr. Rippon for his funeral text.) *Thou hast in love to my soul, cast all my sins behind thy back*. On the next evening, Monday June 7, he preached a sermon to the _Friendly Benefit Society,_ which he had established for pious men, and which still conducts its business in the vestry of Eagle-street meeting-house. His text was, (and this was the last from which he preached) Heb. xiii.7. *Let brotherly love continue*. After the sermon he conversed freely with some of the members of the society, and at parting he said with a cheerful voice, _Farewell;_ and then coming back to the vestry, he took as it were a parting look of the meeting-house, and of his old friends, repeating emphatically, _Farewell._ This was the last time he ever entered the meeting.

In his last days, while confined by affliction, his friends who visited him said, they found him always in a happy, spiritual, resigned frame; his soul resting on Christ alone for salvation *

(* He was visited during the time of his last illness by that eminently useful clergyman, the Rev. William Romaine, M.A. Rector of St. Ann_s Blackfriars, and Lecturer at St. Dunstan_s Fleet-street. This good man it is said, was very much attached to Dr. Gifford, and (as well as the Rev. Augustus Toplady,) was sometimes a hearer in the Meeting-house, Eagle-street. His last interview was very affecting, as the two holy men had a very affectionate meeting, and a most affecting parting.)

He often cried out under his heavy pains, but would presently say, _I cannot help groaning, but though I groan, I trust I do not grumble._ Three days before his death, being asked how he did; he said, _I am in great pain, but bless God, this is not hell! Blessed be God, this is not hell! Blessed be God for Jesus Christ._ In the last hours of life, being asked whether any of his friends should be sent for, he replied, _I want no

friend but Christ; I wish to see no friend but Christ._ Some of his last words were, _Oh, what should I do now, were it not for Jesus Christ? What should I do now, were it not for an interest in Jesus Christ?_ Thus while affectionately recommending the Saviour to those who were about his bed, he fell asleep in Jesus, about eight o'clock, Saturday evening, June 19, 1784; in the eighty-fourth year of his age; and about the sixtieth of his public ministry.

The remains of Dr. Gifford were interred on Friday morning, July 2, 1784, in Bunhill-fields very early in the morning; according to the request of the deceased, who had often wished he might be buried, even earlier than six o'clock, _to testify his faith in the resurrection of Christ, who arose early on the first day of the week, and likewise his hope of the resurrection morning at the last day._ It was on this occasion, that the very intimate friend of Dr. Gifford, the Rev. John Ryland of Northampton, while standing on a tombstone, delivered that remarkable oration, contrasting the first and second coming of Christ; the powerful eloquence of which has been compared, by no incompetent judge, to the thundering eloquence of Demosthenes. The closing sentences are, _Who can tell the triumphs of our Redeemer's soul, in the prospect he had of this island of great Britain, of London, and its ministers and churches; of his saving the dear deceased man, and millions more yet unborn!

With respect to our departed friend, who has left our world at the age of eighty-four, it is no hard matter to tell where a man is gone, who has lived almost all his life, or if we can only say fifty-years, in the exercise of his faith in Christ, and repentance towards God: in love to mankind, preaching in an evangelical strain through the whole course of his ministry, As to his character I will leave that to be set in a proper light by my younger brother. And now we can with the greatest truth use the common words, in the form of service in the Church of England; _We commit this body to the ground, in sure and certain hope of a resurrection to eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord_.

Farewell, thou dear old man! We leave thee in possession of death till the resurrection day: but we will bear witness against thee, oh king of terrors, at the mouth of this dungeon; thou shalt not always have possession of this dead body; it shall be demanded of thee by the great Conqueror, and at that moment thou shalt resign thy prisoner. Oh ye ministers of Christ, ye people of God, ye surrounding spectators, prepare, prepare to meet this old servant of Christ, at that day, at that hour, when this whole place shall be all nothing, but life and death shall be swallowed up in victory.

The funeral sermon was preached at Eagle-street meeting the following Lord_s-day, in the afternoon, by the Rev. Dr. Rippon, from Isa, xxxviii. 7, and was afterwards published with the address at the grave appended to it. From this publication, principally, the preceding account of Dr. Gifford has been derived.

Dr. Gifford published two sermons while at Little Wild-street, one from Psalm cxlviii.8. *Stormy wind fulfilling his word*; and another from John 3:8. *The wind bloweth where it listeth*, &c. He published also the substance of four sermons preached at the Wednesday evening lecture._An exhortation delivered by him at the ordination of his nephew, Mr.

Joseph Gwennap, with two letters, were published, with that ordination service by Mr. Joseph Potts, in 1764. The text is 1 Tim. 4:16. *Take heed unto thyself, and unto thy doctrine, &c.* And a little piece which has been extensively circulated is attributed to him entitled, *A Bundle of Myrrh.* *

(* The writer has heard it questioned whether Dr. Gifford was the author of that excellent evangelical little tract. It bears the marks of his scriptural and sententious style. When the writer of this first settled at Eagle-street, he found, upon a shelf in the vestry, many hundreds of that work in the French language, which had been printed in the time of the American war for the use of French prisoners. They were given away in 1804, to French prisoners in Portsmouth harbour, and in Portchester Castle.)

To preserve a specimen of the Doctor's preaching, the following extract is made from the close of the sermon preached Nov. 27, 1734, which is dedicated to Sir Richard Ellys, Bart. It is founded upon Ps. 148. *Stormy winds fulfil thy word, &c.*

_ 1. Do stormy winds praise God? Oh the horrid stupidity and ingratitude of men, who receive their all from him, and yet make no returns of acknowledgement or praise! Every favourable providence such receive, will be hereafter an aggravation of their folly and impiety; and if they are not swept away by the besom of destruction in this world, what a dreadful storm will overtake them in the next; Isa. 11:6. Such is the sad insensibility of some, such is their horrid contempt of divine judgments, that they regard not the work of the Lord, nor consider the operation of his hands: even when his hand is lifted up they will not see; but are ready to say, Who is the Almighty, that we should obey his voice? But they shall see and feel his power too, to their eternal cost, when he hurries them away in a *fiery whirlwind, both living and in his wrath*, Ps. 58:9.

_ 2. Do stormy winds fulfil God's word? How much more should we. Tremble, sinners, at his judgments threatened therein: how loud a call is this providence to unfeigned humility and deep repentance for our crying sins, whereby we deserve and provoke his resentment, and none more than the impious slights put upon his word. Oh may his Spirit be poured out from on high, to incline us to return to him with all our hearts, and *prepare us to meet him*, (Amos 4:12.) when he is rising out of his place: whilst the cup of trembling is put into other nation's hands, and his judgments are in the earth, it will be our mercy to hear and fear, and be enabled by his grace to learn and practise righteousness! If Elijah was brought to attend to the soft still voice of his word; by the louder sound of a rattling whirlwind, why should not we? If the giving forth the Law was attended with such blackness and tempest as made the beholders exceedingly fear and quake; what must the breach of it be? Surely *our God is a consuming fire*. The authority it comes with demands our reverence; and such sweetness shines in it as commands our love. Let us, therefore, in the strength of Christ, labour to obey and comply with its precepts, which are indeed, *holy, just, and good*; calculated every way to promote our happiness. The word of God is a sure and perfect rule; and as many as, through the influences of the Holy Spirit promised therein, walk according to it, may humbly hope for mercy and peace. Now the great command of it is to fly to the Lord Jesus Christ, in whom alone there is security and

rest: 'tis he that stays the murmuring thunder of divine vengeance, and prevents the clouds, big with terror and destructions, from bursting on our guilty heads; *There is no salvation in any other*; he only can *deliver from the wrath to come*. Out of him, therefore you are for ever undone. If any are by his convincing Spirit made sensible of this, and are with one we read of when in a storm crying out, *What shall I do to be saved?* Such may look unto Jesus, depend on his merit, plead his righteousness, and beg that he would write his law in their hearts, and put his fear into their inward parts. He graciously assures such comers unto him, that *he will in no wise cast out*. Having so done, you may safely depend upon it; seeing he is faithful that has promised: and rejoice in it as your charter for heaven, seeing not one good word of all that he hath spoken shall ever go unfulfilled: he will guide you by his counsel, and afterwards receive you to his glory. *Now unto the Father, the Son, and the Spirit, the one only living and true God, be dominion and praise, for ever. Amen.*

In January m 1779, Dr. Gifford presented fifty pounds to the managers of the Baptist Fund, by the hands of James Smith; it was kindly received, and the thanks of the managers respectfully presented to Dr. Gifford for his said gift.

Dr. Gifford left by his will four hundred pounds, in the three per cents for the use of the minister and the poor of the church in Eagle-street. He left also a small sum for the poor members, and a legacy to each of the seven deacons, with some small bequests to a few ministers of his acquaintance. His valuable books, pictures, and manuscripts, with a vast variety of curiosities, he bequeathed to the Baptist Academy at Bristol; and caused an elegant room to be erected, called *Gifford's Museum*. The value of this legacy was estimated at £1000. He probably was in some measure influenced to do this on account of his having been an assistant in the ministry and the Academy to Mr. Bernard Foskett, from Jan. 11, 1727, till he removed to London. He wished also to have taken an active part in procuring a charter and an endowment for this seminary as a college, but the modesty of the tutors, Messrs. Evans and Newton, prevented him from promoting that object. *

(*It was doubtless to Dr. Gifford that the Rev. Robert Robinson alludes, when telling his friend, in 1781, the Rev. Daniel Turner, of Abingdon, his plan for a Baptist college. *I know,* says he, *a gentleman who would give books, manuscripts, &c. to such a house, worth 1000l.* In another place he says, *The design of the Rev. Andrew Gifford of introducing into the Baptist churches sound and sufficient learning, and, for this purpose of bestowing certain valuable original paintings, books &c. would have been glorious in any man, and is most of all so in a man whose abilities and merits have not been sufficiently understood in some few of our leading churches. The Baptist cause wants only learning to give it credit and success. Let the first and best room in the Baptist college be called the Giffordian Room, and be used always to contain the pictures, &c. of Dr. Gifford.* *Dyer's Life of Robinson*, pp. 129, 469, 470.)

In the new building, which has since been erected for the academy at Bristol, the library and museum contains these valuable presents, where the Doctor's name is duly honoured; and his curiosities are shown for the gratification of its numerous visitors. Very good portraits of his venerable grand father, of himself, and his two wives, are among its ornaments. There is an excellent painting, too, of the Doctor, (from whence his engravings, holding Magna Charta and the Alexandrian MS. in his hand, appear to be taken,) in the British Museum, which a few years since was in one of the public rooms of that institution: there is also a bust, which is said to be an excellent likeness, in the vestry of Eagle-street meeting-house.

The following is the inscription in the Museum, which has been Englished by my friend Mr. John Satchell:—

D.O.M.P.F.S.

IN VSVM. JVVENTVT.

GYMNASIOLI HVJVSMODI BAPTISTI.I.

MVNIFICENTIA. EDW. TERRIL.

OLIM INSTITVTI.

MVSEVM. HOC. D.D.D.

GIFFORD, D.D.

AET, LXXX. AVG. XXVIII.

MDCCLXX.

HVG. ET CALEB EVANS, A.M. ET JAC. NEWTON,

GYMNASIARCHIS.

TRANSLATION.

To God, Father, Son and Spirit,

For the use of this Baptist Academy,

Formerly founded by the munificence of Edward Terrill.

This Museum was given by

A. GIFFORD, D.D.

In the 80th year of his age, August 28, 1780,

And dedicated to Hugh and Caleb Evans, M.A. and James Newton,

Masters.

There is a plain head-stone in Bunhill-fields, on which is the following inscription:—

H. S. E.

A. GIFFORD; D.D.P.F.

VIX ANN. LXXXIII

MDCCLXXXIII.

The labours of Dr. Gifford appear to have been highly esteemed by those were members of the church while under his care; of whom there are but four or five now living: one of these is Mr. James Pritt, of Wood-street, who has been upwards of fifty years a member, and for more than forty-six a deacon.

The Doctor was twice married. By his first wife, Martha Ware, he had two sons, and by his second, Grace Paynter, he had one; but all three of his children died in their infancy: his second wife died more than twenty years before him. Of Mrs. Martha Gifford, in her funeral sermon, Dr. John Gills says, _Upon the testimony of those that knew her, which I believe is just and to be depended upon, I shall say something of her character. It pleased God to call her by his grace, very early, and to engage her heart betimes to give up herself not only to the Lord, but to a church of Christ, by the will of God, to walk with his people in the ordinances of his gospel; and as it was through the preaching of the doctrines of grace that she was at first wrought upon, so she ever retained a value for them, and an esteem of them. God, in his providence, indulged her with a plenty of worldly substance; but this fullness was without forgetfulness of her God, or pride and haughtiness towards her fellow-creatures. As she was of an easy temper and disposition and in easy circumstances in life, so the former was without indolence, and the latter not without industry. She had firmness and resolution of mind, both in the affairs of religion and the things of this life, but without obstinacy and stubbornness. She was constant and zealous in the exercise of religious duties, but without dependance upon them, or ostentation in them. In her last hours, this passage of Scripture I have been discoursing from, (Gen.iii.15,) and indeed the whole chapter, was very refreshing to her, when, as she said, the adversary was very busy; but Christ, the seed of woman, who has bruised the serpent_s head, appeared to her relief, and graciously assured her, that he who comes to him, he will in no wise cast out, and that he had loved her with and everlasting love, and therefore with loving kindness had drawn her to himself; from whence there is reason to conclude a comfortable and dwell-grounded hope of her everlasting salvation and happiness. Wherefore it becomes her relatives and friends not to *sorrow as others who*

have no hope: for if we believe that Jesus died, and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him, _

Mrs. Grace Gifford, whose maiden name was Paynter, it appears was a member of the church in Eagle-street, which she joined Oct. 9, 1737. I have no account when this union took place; but her death is thus affectionately recorded by her surviving and sorrowing husband in the church-book: __Nov. 28, 1762, my dear help-meet, Grace Gifford, after a tedious illness of fourteen weeks, during which she kept her bed, with great patience and submission, went smiling in death to glory. Her funeral sermon was preached by brother Brittain, from Sol. Song. ii. 4. *He brought me to the banqueting house, and his banner over me was love:* which was the word which set her at liberty. She was buried the same day the sermon was preached, December 5, at sun-rising, in Bunhill-fields; where a hymn was sung according to her request; and a young woman was, it is to be hoped, converted by what was spoken by brother Britain on the occasion there. _

The church in Eagle-street retains a small token of the affectionate respect of this good woman. Two years before her death she presented, in connexion with her husband, a handsome silver tankard for the use of the Lord_s table; on this is engraven the Doctor_s coat of arms, with the words *Meliora Spero*, i.e. *_I will hope for better things;_* and the following inscription: *_ _The Gift of Andrew and Grace Gifford, to the Protestant Dissenting Congregation of Baptists, in Eagle-street, London, MDCCLX._*

At the commencement of this account, Mr. John Payne was noticed as having been a liberal benefactor to the church: one moiety of the interest belongs to the pastor for the time being, and the other is applicable to the rent of the meeting-house, repairs, &c. at the discretion of the deacons: the name also of a benefactress must not be written in the dust. This was Mrs. Priscilla Edwards, who, in 1756, presented the church with two silver dishes for the use of the Lord_s table, and at her death left one hundred pounds in the three per cents. *_the interest for the support of the ministry in Eagle-street for ever._* Dr. Andrew Gifford left four hundred pounds in the three per cents. Mr. William Tongue, who joined the church in 1756, though he appears to have been an occasional member many years before, in that year gave the church a silver tankard for the use of the Lord_s table. And a few years since, the late Mrs. Barbara George, of Holywell-street, presented, for the same use, a pair of silver candlesticks. To these must be added the names of Mrs. Elizabeth Lascelles, and Mrs. Thomas, who bequeathed legacies for the use of the church.

CONCLUSION

AND now, having by divine help, and notwithstanding many interruptions from accidents, bodily indisposition, and other circumstances, brought the Volume to a close, the Author, most solemnly, in the first place, consecrates it to the honour of the Redeemer, to whose mercy he owes all his happiness in the present life, and his hopes of blessedness in that which is to come. He then devotes it to the service of the churches of

that Denomination of which he is an unworthy member and minister; intreating those, into whose hands the Volume may come, to read it without prejudice, and with the determination to follow those whose memoirs it contains, so far as they followed Christ. Ministers and Deacons, on whom the discipline of the churches chiefly depends, will do well to notice the history of those communities which have either declined or have become extinct, that they may avoid the shoals on which they have been stranded, or the rocks on which they were ship wrecked. Many things will be found in this Volume adapted both for admonition and imitation, for reproof and encouragement, for warning and consolation; affording abundant proof that HE who holds his faithful ministers as *stars in his right hand*, still walks in the midst of his churches, comparable, while uncorrupted, to *golden candlesticks*; but letting all the churches know either by the tokens of his approbation, or by the expressions of his displeasure, that he *searcheth the reins and the hearts, and gives unto every one of them according to their works*. Rev.ii. 23. The author concludes by earnestly imploring for all the churches of Christ, whether of his own, or of any other denomination of Christians an abundant supply of the Spirit of Christ, and all the blessings connected with its most copious effusion and richest influence; and by enjoining upon all who bear the Christian name, a rigid and circumspect attention to the apostolic exhortations, *Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things. Those things, which ye have both learned, and received, and heard, and seen in me, do: and the God of peace shall be with you* Phil. 4:8, 9.

End of Volume III.